THE HUDSON REVIEW

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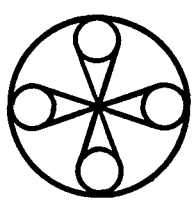

Series

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A Phoenix Too Frequent [1]

CHRISTOPHER FRY

'To whom conferr'd a peacock's undecent,
A squirrel's harsh, a phoenix too frequent.'
Robert Burton quoting Martial

CHARACTERS: DYNAMENE, DOTO, TEGEUS-CHROMIS

SCENE: *The tomb of Virilius, near Ephesus; night*

NOTE: *The story was got from Jeremy Taylor who had it from Petronius*

An underground tomb, in darkness except for the very low light of an oil-lamp. Above ground the starlight shows a line of trees on which hang the bodies of several men. It also penetrates a gate and falls on to the first of the steps which descend into the darkness of the tomb. DOTO *talks to herself in the dark.*

DOTO. Nothing but the harmless day gone into black
Is all the dark is. And so what's my trouble?
Demons is so much wind. Are so much wind.
I've plenty to fill my thoughts. All that I ask
Is don't keep turning men over in my mind,
Venerable Aphrodite. I've had my last one
And thank you. I thank thee. He smelt of sour grass
And was likeable. He collected ebony quoits.
[*An owl hoots near at hand.*
O Zeus! O some god or other, where is the oil?
Fire's from Prometheus. I thank thee. If I
Mean to die I'd better see what I'm doing.
[*She fills the lamp with oil. The flame burns up brightly and shows* DYNAMENE, *beautiful and young, leaning asleep beside a bier.*

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Honestly, I would rather have to sleep
With a bald bee-keeper who was wearing his boots
Than spend more days fasting and thirsting and crying
In a tomb. I shouldn't have said that. Pretend
I didn't hear myself. But life and death
Is cat and dog in this double-bed of a world.
My master, my poor master, was a man
Whose nose was as straight as a little buttress,
And now he has taken it into Elysium
Where it won't be noticed among all the other straightness.
[*The owl cries again and wakens* DYNAMENE.
Oh, them owls. Those owls. It's woken her.

DYNAMENE. Ah! I'm breathless. I caught up with the ship
But it spread its wings, creaking a cry of *Dew,*
Dew! and flew figurehead foremost into the sun.

DOTO. How crazy, madam.

DYNAMENE. Doto, draw back the curtains.
I'll take my barley-water.

DOTO. We're not at home
Now, madam. It's the master's tomb.

DYNAMENE. Of course!
Oh, I'm wretched. Already I have disfigured
My vigil. My cynical eyelids have soon dropped me
In a dream.

DOTO. But then it's possible, madam, you might
Find yourself in bed with him again
In a dream, madam. Was he on the ship?

DYNAMENE. He was the ship.

DOTO. Oh. That makes it different.

DYNAMENE. He was the ship. He had such a deck, Doto,
Such a white, scrubbed deck. Such a stern prow,
Such a proud stern, so slim from port to starboard.
If ever you meet a man with such fine masts
Give your life to him, Doto. The figurehead
Bore his own features, so serene in the brow
And hung with a little seaweed. O Virilius,

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My husband, you have left a wake in my soul.
You cut the glassy water with a diamond keel.
I must cry again.

DOTO. What, when you mean to join him?
Don't you believe he will be glad to see you, madam?
Thankful to see you, I should imagine, among
Them shapes and shades; all shapes of shapes and all
Shades of shades, from what I've heard. I know
I shall feel odd at first with Cerberus,
Sop or no sop. Still, I know how you feel, madam.
You think he may find a temptation in Hades.
I shouldn't worry. It would help him to settle down.

[DYNAMENE *weeps.*

It would only be *fun,* madam. He couldn't go far
With a shade.

DYNAMENE. He was one of the coming men.
He was certain to have become the most well-organized provost
The town has known, once they had made him provost.
He was so punctual, you could regulate
The sun by him. He made the world succumb
To his daily revolution of habit. But who,
In the world he has gone to, will appreciate that?
O poor Virilius! To be a coming man
Already gone—it must be distraction.
Why did you leave me walking about our ambitions
Like a cat in the ruins of a house? Promising husband,
Why did you insult me by dying? Virilius,
Now I keep no flower, except in the vase
Of the tomb.

DOTO. O poor madam! O poor master!
I presume so far as to cry somewhat for myself
As well. I know you won't mind, madam. It's two
Days not eating makes me think of my uncle's
Shop in the country, where he has a hardware business,
Basins, pots, ewers, and alabaster birds.
He makes you die of laughing. O madam,
Isn't it sad?

[*They both weep.*

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DYNAMENE. How could I have allowed you
To come and die of my grief? Doto, it puts
A terrible responsibility on me. Have you
No grief of your own you could die of?

DOTO. Not really, madam.

DYNAMENE. Nothing?

DOTO. Not really. They was all one to me.
Well, all but two was all one to me. And they,
Strange enough, was two who kept recurring.
I could never be sure if they had gone for good
Or not; and so that kept things cheerful, madam.
One always gave a wink before he deserted me,
The other slapped me as it were behind, madam;
Then they would be away for some months.

DYNAMENE. Oh Doto,
What an unhappy life you were having to lead.

DOTO. Yes, I'm sure. But never mind, madam,
It seemed quite lively then. And now I know
It's what you say; life is more big than a bed
And full of miracles and mysteries like
One man made for one woman, etcetera, etcetera.
Lovely. I feel sung, madam, by a baritone
In mixed company with everyone pleased.
And so I had to come with you here, madam,
For the last sad chorus of me. It's all
Fresh to me. Death's a new interest in life,
If it doesn't disturb you, madam, to have me crying.
It's because of us not having breakfast again.
And the master, of course. And the beautiful world.
And you crying too, madam. Oh—Oh!

DYNAMENE. I can't forbid your crying; but you must cry
On the other side of the tomb. I'm becoming confused.
This is my personal grief and my sacrifice
Of self, solus. Right over there, darling girl.

DOTO. What, here?

DYNAMENE. Now, if you wish, you may cry, Doto.

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But our tears are very different. For me
The world is all with Charon, all, all,
Even the metal and plume of the rose garden,
And the forest where the sea fumes overhead
In vegetable tides, and particularly
The entrance to the warm baths in Arcite Street
Where we first met;—all!—the sun itself
Trails an evening hand in the sultry river
Far away down by Acheron. I am lonely,
Virilius. Where is the punctual eye
And where is the cautious voice which made
Balance-sheets sound like Homer and Homer sound
Like balance-sheets? The precision of limbs, the amiable
Laugh, the exact festivity? Gone from the world.
You were the peroration of nature, Virilius.
You explained everything to me, even the extremely
Complicated gods. You wrote them down
In seventy columns. Dear curling calligraphy!
Gone from the world, once and for all. And I taught you
In your perceptive moments to appreciate me.
You said I was harmonious, Virilius,
Moulded and harmonious, little matronal
Ox-eye, your package. And then I would walk
Up and down largely, as it were making my own
Sunlight. What a mad blacksmith creation is
Who blows his furnaces until the stars fly upward
And iron Time is hot and politicians glow
And bulbs and roots sizzle into hyacinth
And orchis, and the sand puts out the lion,
Roaring yellow, and oceans bud with porpoises,
Blenny, tunny and the almost unexisting
Blindfish; throats are cut, the masterpiece
Looms out of labour; nations and rebellions
Are spat out to hang on the wind—and all is gone
In one Virilius, wearing his office tunic,
Checking the pence column as he went.
Where's animation now? What is there that stays
To dance? The eye of the one-eyed world is out.

[*She weeps.*

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DOTO. I shall try to grieve a little, too.
It would take lessons, I imagine, to do it out loud
For long. If I could only remember
Any one of those fellows without wanting to laugh.
Hopeless, I am. Now those good pair of shoes
I gave away without thinking, that's a different—
Well, I've cried enough about *them,* I suppose.
Poor madam, poor master.

[TEGEUS *comes through the gate to the top of the steps.*

TEGEUS. What's your trouble?

DOTO. Oh!
Oh! Oh, a man. I thought for a moment it was something
With harm in it. Trust a man to be where it's dark.
What is it? Can't you sleep?

TEGEUS. Now, listen—

DOTO. Hush!
Remember you're in the grave. You must go away.
Madam is occupied.

TEGEUS. What, here?

DOTO. Becoming
Dead. We both are.

TEGEUS. What's going on here?

DOTO. Grief.
Are you satisfied now?

TEGEUS. Less and less. Do you know
What the time is?

DOTO. I'm not interested.
We've done with all that. Go away. Be a gentleman.
If we can't be free of men in a grave
Death's a dead loss.

TEGEUS. It's two in the morning. All
I ask is what are women doing down here
At two in the morning?

DOTO. Can't you see she's crying?

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Or is she sleeping again? Either way
She's making arrangements to join her husband.

TEGEUS. Where?

DOTO. Good god, in the Underworld, dear man. Haven't you learnt
About life and death?

TEGEUS. In a manner, yes; in a manner;
The rudiments. So the lady means to die?

DOTO. For love; beautiful, curious madam.

TEGEUS. Not curious;
I've had thoughts like it. Death is a kind of love.
Not anything I can explain.

DOTO. You'd better come in
And sit down.

TEGEUS. I'd be grateful.

DOTO. Do. It will be my last
Chance to have company, in the flesh.

TEGEUS. Do you mean
You're going too?

DOTO. Oh, certainly I am.
Not anything I can explain.
It all started with madam saying a man
Was two men really, and I'd only noticed one,
One each, I mean. It seems he has a soul
As well as his other troubles. And I like to know
What I'm getting with a man. I'm inquisitive,
I suppose you'd call me.

TEGEUS. It takes some courage.

DOTO. Well, yes
And no. I'm fond of change.

TEGEUS. Would you object
To have me eating my supper here?

DOTO. Be careful

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Of the crumbs. We don't want a lot of squeaking mice
Just when we're dying.

TEGEUS. What a sigh she gave then.
Down the air like a slow comet.
And now she's all dark again. Mother of me.
How long has this been going on?

DOTO. Two days.
It should have been three by now, but at first
Madam had difficulty with the Town Council. They said
They couldn't have a tomb used as a private residence.
But madam told them she wouldn't be eating here,
Only suffering, and they thought that would be all right.

TEGEUS. Two of you. Marvellous. Who would have said
I should ever have stumbled on anything like this?
Do you have to cry? Yes, I suppose so. It's all
Quite reasonable.

DOTO. Your supper and your knees.
That's what's making me cry. I can't bear sympathy
And they're sympathetic.

TEGEUS. Please eat a bit of something.
I've no appetite left.

DOTO. And see her go ahead of me?
Wrap it up; put it away. You sex of wicked beards!
It's no wonder you have to shave off your black souls
Every day as they push through your chins.
I'll turn my back on you. It means utter
Contempt. Eat? Utter contempt. Oh, little new rolls!

TEGEUS. Forget it, forget it; please forget it. Remember
I've had no experience of this kind of thing before.
Indeed I'm as sorry as I know how to be. Ssh,
We'll disturb her. She sighed again. O Zeus,
It's terrible! Asleep, and still sighing.
Mourning has made a warren in her spirit,
All that way below. Ponos! the heart
Is the devil of a medicine.

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DOTO. And I don't intend
To turn round.

TEGEUS. I understand how you must feel.
Would it be—have you any objection
To my having a drink? I have a little wine here.
And, you probably see how it is: grief's in order,
And death's in order, and women—I can usually
Manage that too; but not all three together
At this hour of the morning. So you'll excuse me.
How about you? It would make me more comfortable
If you'd take a smell of it.

DOTO. One for the road?

TEGEUS. One for the road.

DOTO. It's the dust in my throat. The tomb
Is so dusty. Thanks, I will. There's no point in dying
Of everything, simultaneous.

TEGEUS. It's lucky
I brought two bowls. I was expecting to keep
A drain for my relief when he comes in the morning.

DOTO. Are you on duty?

TEGEUS. Yes.

DOTO. It looks like it.

TEGEUS. Well,
Here's your good health.

DOTO. What good is that going to do me?
Here's to an easy crossing and not too much waiting
About on the bank. Do you have to tremble like that?

TEGEUS. The idea—I can't get used to it.

DOTO. For a member
Of the forces, you're peculiarly queasy. I wish
Those owls were in Hades—oh no; let them stay where they are.
Have you never had nothing to do with corpses before?

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TEGEUS. I've got six of them outside.

DOTO. Morpheus, that's plenty.
What are they doing there?

TEGEUS. Hanging.

DOTO. Hanging?

TEGEUS. On trees.
Five plane trees and a holly. The holly-berries
Are just reddening. Another drink?

DOTO. Why not?

TEGEUS. It's from Samos. Here's—

DOTO. All right. Let's just drink it.
—How did they get in that predicament?

TEGEUS. The sandy-haired fellow said we should collaborate
With everybody; the little man said he wouldn't
Collaborate with anybody; the old one
Said that the Pleiades weren't sisters but cousins
And anyway were manufactured in Lacedaemon.
The fourth said that we hanged men for nothing.
The other two said nothing. Now they hang
About at the corner of the night, they're present
And absent, horribly obsequious to every
Move in the air, and yet they keep me standing
For five hours at a stretch.

DOTO. The wine has gone
Down to my knees.

TEGEUS. And up to your cheeks. You're looking
Fresher. If only—

DOTO. Madam? She never would.
Shall I ask her?

TEGEUS. No; no, don't dare, don't breathe it.
This is privilege, to come so near
To what is undeceiving and uncorrupt
And undivided; this is the clear fashion

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For all souls, a ribbon to bind the unruly
Curls of living, a faith, a hope, Zeus
Yes, a fine thing. I am human, and this
Is human fidelity, and we can be proud
And unphilosophical.

DOTO. I need to dance
But I haven't the use of my legs.

TEGEUS. No, no, don't dance,
Or, at least, only inwards; don't dance; cry
Again. We'll put a moat of tears
Round her bastion of love, and save
The world. It's something, it's more than something,
It's regeneration, to see how a human cheek
Can become as pale as a pool.

DOTO. Do you love me, handsome?

TEGEUS. To have found life, after all, unambiguous!

DOTO. Did you say Yes?

TEGEUS. Certainly; just now I love all men.

DOTO. So do I.

TEGEUS. And the world is a good creature again.
I'd begun to see it as mildew, verdigris,
Rust, woodrot, or as though the sky had uttered
An oval twirling blasphemy with occasional vistas
In country districts. I was within an ace
Of volunteering for overseas service. Despair
Abroad can always nurse pleasant thoughts of home.
Integrity, by god!

DOTO. I love all the world
And the movement of the apple in your throat.
So shall you kiss me? It would be better, I should think,
To go moistly to Hades.

TEGEUS. Hers is the way,
Luminous with sorrow.

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DOTO. Then I'll take
Another little swiggy. I love all men,
Everybody, even you, and I'll pick you
Some outrageous honeysuckle for your helmet,
If only it lived here. Pardon.

DYNAMENE. Doto. Who is it?

DOTO. Honeysuckle, madam. Because of the bees.
Go back to sleep, madam.

DYNAMENE. What person is it?

DOTO. Yes, I see what you mean, madam. It's a kind of
Corporal talking to his soul, on a five-hour shift,
Madam, with six bodies. He's been having his supper.

TEGEUS. I'm going. It's terrible that we should have disturbed her.

DOTO. He was delighted to see you so sad, madam.
It has stopped him going abroad.

DYNAMENE. One with six bodies?
A messenger, a guide to where we go.
It is possible he has come to show us the way
Out of these squalid suburbs of life, a shade,
A gorgon, who has come swimming up, against
The falls of my tears (for which in truth he would need
Many limbs) to guide me to Virilius.
I shall go quietly.

TEGEUS. I do assure you—
Such clumsiness, such a vile and unforgivable
Intrusion. I shall obliterate myself
Immediately.

DOTO. Oblit—oh, what a pity
To oblit. Pardon. Don't let him, the nice fellow.

DYNAMENE. Sir: your other five bodies: where are they?

TEGEUS. Madam—
Outside; I have them outside. On trees.

DYNAMENE. Quack!

TEGEUS. What do I reply?

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DYNAMENE. Quack, charlatan!
You've never known the gods. You came to mock me.
Doto, this never was a gorgon, never.
Nor a gentleman either. He's completely spurious.
Admit it, you creature. Have you even a feather
Of the supernatural in your system? Have you?

TEGEUS. Some of my relations—

DYNAMENE. Well?

TEGEUS. Are dead, I think;
That is to say I have connexions—

DYNAMENE. Connexions
With pickpockets. It's a shameless imposition.
Does the army provide you with no amusements?
If I were still of the world, and not cloistered
In a colourless landscape of winter thought
Where the approaching Spring is desired oblivion,
I should write sharply to your commanding officer.
It should be done, it should be done. If my fingers
Weren't so cold I would do it now. But they are,
Horribly cold. And why should insolence matter
When my colour of life is unreal, a blush on death,
A partial mere diaphane? I don't know
Why it should matter. Oafish, non-commissioned
Young man! The boots of your conscience will pinch for ever
If life's dignity has any self-protection.
Oh, I have to sit down. The tomb's going round.

DOTO. Oh, madam, don't give over. I can't remember
When things were so lively. He looks marvellously
Marvellously uncomfortable. Go on, madam.
Can't you, madam? Oh, madam, don't you feel up to it?
There, do you see her, you acorn-chewing infantryman?
You've made her cry, you square-bashing barbarian.

TEGEUS. O history, my private history, why
Was I led here? What stigmatism has got
Into my stars? Why wasn't it my brother?

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He has a tacit misunderstanding with everybody
And washes in it. Why wasn't it my mother?
She makes a collection of other people's tears
And dries them all. Let them forget I came;
And lie in the terrible black crystal of grief
Which held them, before I broke it. Outside, Tegeus.

DOTO. Hey, I don't think so, I shouldn't say so. Come
Down again, uniform. Do you think you're going
To half kill an unprotected lady and then
Back out upwards? Do you think you can leave her like this?

TEGEUS. Yes, yes, I'll leave her. O directorate of gods,
How can I? Beauty's bit is between my teeth.
She has added another torture to me. Bottom
Of Hades' bottom.

DOTO. Madam. Madam, the corporal
Has some wine here. It will revive you, madam.
And then you can go at him again, madam.

TEGEUS. It's the opposite of everything you've said,
I swear. I swear by Horkos and the Styx,
I swear by the nine acres of Tityos,
I swear the Hypnotic oath, by all the Titans—
By Koeos, Krios, Iapetos, Kronos, and so on—
By the three Hekatoncheires, by the insomnia
Of Tisiphone, by Jove, by jove, and the dew
On the feet of my boyhood, I am innocent
Of mocking you. Am I a Salmoneus
That, seeing such a flame of sorrow—

DYNAMENE. You needn't
Labour to prove your secondary education.
Perhaps I jumped to a wrong conclusion, perhaps
I was hasty.

DOTO. How easy to swear if you're properly educated.
Wasn't it pretty, madam? Pardon.

DYNAMENE. If I misjudged you
I apologize, I apologize. Will you please leave us?

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You were wrong to come here. In a place of mourning
Light itself is a trespasser; nothing can have
The right of entrance except those natural symbols
Of mortality, the jabbing, funeral, sleek-
With-omen raven, the death-watch beetle which mocks
Time: particularly, I'm afraid, the spider
Weaving his home with swift self-generated
Threads of slaughter; and, of course, the worm.
I wish it could be otherwise. Oh dear,
They aren't easy to live with.

DOTO. Not even a *little* wine, madam?

DYNAMENE. Here, Doto?

DOTO. Well, on the steps perhaps,
Except it's so draughty.

DYNAMENE. Doto! Here?

DOTO. No, madam:
I quite see.

DYNAMENE. I might be wise to strengthen myself
In order to fast again; it would make me abler
For grief. I will breathe a little of it, Doto.

DOTO. Thank god. Where's the bottle?

DYNAMENE. What an exquisite bowl.

TEGEUS. Now that it's peacetime we have pottery classes.

DYNAMENE. You made it yourself?

TEGEUS. Yes. Do you see the design?
The corded god, tied also by the rays
Of the sun, and the astonished ship erupting
Into vines and vine-leaves, inverted pyramids
Of grapes, the uplifted hands of the men (the raiders),
And here the headlong sea, itself almost
Venturing into leaves and tendrils, and Proteus
With his beard braiding the wind, and this
Held by other hands is a drowned sailor—

DYNAMENE. Always, always.

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DOTO. Hold the bowl steady, madam.
Pardon.

DYNAMENE. Doto, have you been drinking?

DOTO. Here, madam?
I coaxed some a little way towards my mouth, madam,
But I scarcely swallowed except because I had to. The hiccup
Is from no breakfast, madam, and not meant to be funny.

DYNAMENE. You may drink this too. Oh, how the inveterate body,
Even when cut from the heart, insists on leaf,
Puts out, with a separate meaningless will,
Fronds to intercept the thankless sun.
How it does, oh, how it does. And how it confuses
The nature of the mind.

TEGEUS. Yes, yes, the confusion;
That's something I understand better than anything.

DYNAMENE. When the thoughts would die, the instincts will set sail
For life. And when the thoughts are alert for life
The instincts will rage to be destroyed on the rocks.
To Virilius it was not so; his brain was an ironing-board
For all crumpled indecision: and I follow him,
The hawser of my world. You don't belong here,
You see; you don't belong here at all.

TEGEUS. If only
I did. If only you knew the effort it costs me
To mount those steps again into an untrustworthy,
Unpredictable, unenlightened night,
And turn my back on—on a state of affairs,
I can only call it a vision, a hope, a promise,
A—By that I mean loyalty, enduring passion,
Unrecking bravery and beauty all in one.

DOTO. He means you, or you and me; or me, madam.

TEGEUS. It only remains for me to thank you, and to say
That whatever awaits me and for however long

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I may be played by this poor musician, existence,
Your person and sacrifice will leave their trace
As clear upon me as the shape of the hills
Around my birthplace. Now I must leave you to your husband.

DOTO. Oh! You, madam.

DYNAMENE. I'll tell you what I will do.
I will drink with you to the memory of my husband,
Because I have been curt, because you are kind,
And because I'm extremely thirsty. And then we will say
Good-bye and part to go to our opposite corruptions,
The world and the grave.

TEGEUS. The climax to the vision.

DYNAMENE [*drinking*]. My husband, and all he stood for.

TEGEUS. Stands for.

DYNAMENE. Stands for.

TEGEUS. Your husband.

DOTO. The master.

DYNAMENE. How good it is,
How it sings to the throat, purling with summer.

TEGEUS. It has a twin nature, winter and warmth in one,
Moon and meadow. Do you agree?

DYNAMENE. Perfectly;
A cold bell sounding in a golden month.

TEGEUS. Crystal in harvest.

DYNAMENE. Perhaps a nightingale
Sobbing among the pears.

TEGEUS. In an old autumnal midnight.

DOTO. Grapes.—Pardon. There's some more here.

TEGEUS. Plenty.
I drink to the memory of your husband.

DYNAMENE. My husband.

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DOTO. The master.

DYNAMENE. He was careless in his choice of wines.

TEGEUS. And yet
Rendering to living its rightful poise is not
Unimportant.

DYNAMENE. A mystery's in the world
Where a little liquid, with flavour, quality, and fume
Can be as no other, can hint and flute our senses
As though a music played in harvest hollows
And a movement was in the swathes of our memory.
Why should scent, why should flavour come
With such wings upon us? Parsley, for instance.

TEGEUS. Seaweed.

DYNAMENE. Lime trees.

DOTO. Horses.

TEGEUS. Fruit in the fire.

DYNAMENE. Do I know your name?

TEGEUS. Tegeus.

DYNAMENE. That's very thin for you,
It hardly covers your bones. Something quite different,
Altogether other. I shall think of it presently.

TEGEUS. Darker vowels, perhaps.

DYNAMENE. Yes, certainly darker vowels.
And your consonants should have a slight angle,
And a certain temperature. Do you know what I mean?
It will come to me.

TEGEUS. Now *your* name—

DYNAMENE. It is nothing
To any purpose. I'll be to you the She
In the tomb. You have the air of a natural-historian
As though you were accustomed to handling birds' eggs,
Or tadpoles, or putting labels on moths. You see?
The genius of dumb things, that they are nameless.

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Have I found the seat of the weevil in human brains?
Our names. They make us broody; we sit and sit
To hatch them into reputation and dignity.
And then they set upon us and become despair,
Guilt and remorse. We go where they lead. We dance
Attendance on something wished upon us by the wife
Of our mother's physician. But insects meet and part
And put the woods about them, fill the dusk
And freckle the light and go and come without
A name among them, without the wish of a name
And very pleasant too. Did I interrupt you?

TEGEUS. I forget. We'll have no names then.

DYNAMENE. I should like
You to have a name, I don't know why; a small one
To fill out the conversation.

TEGEUS. I should like
You to have a name too; if only for something
To remember. Have you still some wine in your bowl?

DYNAMENE. Not altogether.

TEGEUS. We haven't come to the end
By several inches. Did I splash you?

DYNAMENE. It doesn't matter.
Well, here's to my husband's name.

TEGEUS. Your husband's name.

DOTO. The master.

DYNAMENE. It was kind of you to come.

TEGEUS. It was more than coming. I followed my future here,
As we all do if we're sufficiently inattentive
And don't vex ourselves with questions; or do I mean
Attentive? If so, attentive to what? Do I sound
Incoherent?

DYNAMENE. You're wrong. There isn't a future here,
Not here, not for you.

TEGEUS. Your name's Dynamene.

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DYNAMENE. Who—Have I been utterly irreverent? Are you—
Who made you say that? Forgive me the question,
But are you dark or light? I mean which shade
Of the supernatural? Or if neither, what prompted you?

TEGEUS. Dynamene—

DYNAMENE. No, but I'm sure you're the friend of nature,
It must be so, I think I see little Phoebuses
Rising and setting in your eyes.

DOTO. They're not little Phoebuses,
They're hoodwinks, madam. Your name is on your brooch.
No little Phoebuses to-night.

DYNAMENE. That's twice
You've played me a trick. Oh, I know practical jokes
Are common on Olympus, but haven't we at all
Developed since the gods were born? Are gods
And men both to remain immortal adolescents?
How tiresome it all is.

TEGEUS. It was you, each time,
Who said I was supernatural. When did I say so?
You're making me into whatever you imagine
And then you blame me because I can't live up to it.

DYNAMENE. I shall call you Chromis. It has a breadlike sound.
I think of you as a crisp loaf.

TEGEUS. And now
You'll insult me because I'm not sliceable.

DYNAMENE. I think drinking is harmful to our tempers.

TEGEUS. If I seem to be frowning, that is only because
I'm looking directly into your light: I must look
Angrily, or shut my eyes.

DYNAMENE. Shut them.—Oh,
You have eyelashes! A new perspective of you.
Is that how you look when you sleep?

TEGEUS. My jaw drops down.

DYNAMENE. Show me how.

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TEGEUS. Like this.

DYNAMENE. It makes an irresistible
Moron of you. Will you waken now?
It's morning; I see a thin dust of daylight
Blowing on to the steps.

TEGEUS. Already? Dynamene,
You're tricked again. This time by the moon.

DYNAMENE. Oh well,
Moon's daylight, then. Doto is asleep.

TEGEUS. Doto
Is asleep . . .

DYNAMENE. Chromis, what made you walk about
In the night? What, I wonder, made you not stay
Sleeping wherever you slept? Was it the friction
Of the world on your mind? Those two are difficult
To make agree. Chromis—now try to learn
To answer your name. I won't say Tegeus.

TEGEUS. And I
Won't say Dynamene.

DYNAMENE. Not?

TEGEUS. It makes you real.
Forgive me, a terrible thing has happened. Shall I
Say it and perhaps destroy myself for you?
Forgive me first, or, more than that, forgive
Nature who winds her furtive stream all through
Our reason. Do you forgive me?

DYNAMENE. I'll forgive
Anything, if it's the only way I can know
What you have to tell me.

TEGEUS. I felt us to be alone;
Here in a grave, separate from any life,
I and the only one of beauty, the only
Persuasive key to all my senses,
In spite of my having lain day after day
And pored upon the sepals, corolla, stamen, and bracts

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Of the yellow bog-iris. Then my body ventured
A step towards interrupting your perfection of purpose
And my own renewed faith in human nature.
Would you have believed that possible?

DYNAMENE. I have never
Been greatly moved by the yellow bog-iris. Alas,
It's as I said. This place is for none but the spider,
Raven and worms, not for a living man.

TEGEUS. It has been a place of blessing to me. It will always
Play in me, a fountain of confidence
When the world is arid. But I know it is true
I have to leave it, and though it withers my soul
I must let you make your journey.

DYNAMENE. No.

TEGEUS. Not true?

DYNAMENE. We can talk of something quite different.

TEGEUS. Yes, we can!
Oh yes, we will! Is it your opinion
That no one believes who hasn't learned to doubt?
Or, another thing, if we persuade ourselves
To one particular Persuasion, become Sophist,
Stoic, Platonist, anything whatever,
Would you say that there must be areas of soul
Lying unproductive therefore, or dishonoured
Or blind?

DYNAMENE. No, I don't know.

TEGEUS. No. It's impossible
To tell. Dynamene, if only I had
Two cakes of pearl-barley and hydromel
I could see you to Hades, leave you with your husband
And come back to the world.

DYNAMENE. Ambition, I suppose,
Is an appetite particular to man.
What is your definition?

TEGEUS. The desire to find
A reason for living.

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DYNAMENE. But then, suppose it leads,
As often, one way or another, it does, to death.

TEGEUS. Then that may be life's reason. Oh, but how
Could I bear to return, Dynamene? The earth's
Daylight would be my grave if I had left you
In that unearthly night.

DYNAMENE. O Chromis—

TEGEUS. Tell me,
What is your opinion of Progress? Does it, for example,
Exist? Is there ever progression without retrogression?
Therefore is it not true that mankind
Can more justly be said increasingly to Gress?
As the material improves, the craftsmanship deteriorates
And honour and virtue remain the same. I love you,
Dynamene.

DYNAMENE. Would you consider we go round and round?

TEGEUS. We concertina, I think; taking each time
A larger breath, so that the farther we go out
The farther we have to go in.

DYNAMENE. There'll come a time
When it will be unbearable to continue.

TEGEUS. Unbearable.

DYNAMENE. Perhaps we had better have something
To eat. The wine has made your eyes so quick
I am breathless beside them. It *is*
Your eyes, I think; or your intelligence
Holding my intelligence up above you
Between its hands. Or the cut of your uniform.

TEGEUS. Here's a new roll with honey. In the gods' names
Let's sober ourselves.

DYNAMENE. As soon as possible.

TEGEUS. Have you
Any notion of algebra?

DYNAMENE. We'll discuss you, Chromis.
We will discuss you, till you're nothing but words.

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TEGEUS. I? There is nothing, of course, I would rather discuss,
Except—if it would be no intrusion—you, Dynamene.

DYNAMENE. No, you couldn't want to. But your birthplace, Chromis,
With the hills that placed themselves in you for ever
As you say, where was it?

TEGEUS. My father's farm at Pyxa.

DYNAMENE. There? Could it be there?

TEGEUS. I was born in the hills
Between showers, a quarter of an hour before milking time.
Do you know Pyxa? It stretches to the crossing of two
Troublesome roads, and buries its back in beechwood,
From which come the white owls of our nights
And the mulling and cradling of doves in the day.
I attribute my character to those shadows
And heavy roots; and my interest in music
To the sudden melodious escape of the young river
Where it breaks from nosing through the cresses and kingcups.
That's honestly so.

DYNAMENE. You used to climb about
Among the windfallen tower of Phrasidemus
Looking for bees' nests.

TEGEUS. What? When have I
Said so?

DYNAMENE. Why, all the children did.

TEGEUS. Yes: but, in the name of light, how do you *know* that?

DYNAMENE. I played there once, on holiday.

TEGEUS. O Klotho,
Lachesis and Atropos!

DYNAMENE. It's the strangest chance:
I may have seen, for a moment, your boyhood.

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TEGEUS. I may
Have seen something like an early flower
Something like a girl. If I only could remember how I must
Have seen you. Were you after the short white violets?
Maybe I blundered past you, taking your look,
And scarcely acknowledged how a star
Ran through me, to live in the brooks of my blood for ever.
Or I saw you playing at hiding in the cave
Where the ferns are and the water drips.

DYNAMENE. I was quite plain and fat and I was usually
Hitting someone. I wish I could remember you.
I'm envious of the days and children who saw you
Then. It is curiously a little painful
Not to share your past.

TEGEUS. How did it come
Our stars could mingle for an afternoon
So long ago, and then forget us or tease us
Or helplessly look on the dark high seas
Of our separation, while time drank
The golden hours? What hesitant fate is that?

DYNAMENE. Time? Time? Why—how old are we?

TEGEUS. Young,
Thank both our mothers, but still we're older than to-night
And so older than we should be. Wasn't I born
In love with what, only now, I have grown to meet?
I'll tell you something else. I was born entirely
For this reason. I was born to fill a gap
In the world's experience, which had never known
Chromis loving Dynamene.

DYNAMENE. You are so
Excited, poor Chromis. What is it? Here you sit
With a woman who has wept away all claims
To appearance, unbecoming in her oldest clothes,
With not a trace of liveliness, a drab

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Of melancholy, entirely shadow without
A smear of sun. Forgive me if I tell you
That you fall easily into superlatives.

TEGEUS. Very well. I'll say nothing, then. I'll fume
With feeling.

DYNAMENE. Now you go to the extreme. Certainly
You must speak. You may have more to say. Besides
You might let your silence run away with you
And not say something that you should. And how
Should I answer you then? Chromis, you boy,
I can't look away from you. You use
The lamplight and the moon so skilfully,
So arrestingly, in and around your furrows.
A humorous ploughman goes whistling to a team
Of sad sorrow, to and fro in your brow
And over your arable cheek. Laugh for me. Have you
Cried for women, ever?

TEGEUS. In looking about for you.
But I have recognized them for what they were.

DYNAMENE. What were they?

TEGEUS. Never you: never, although
They could walk with bright distinction into all men's
Longest memories, never you, by a hint
Or a faint quality, or at least not more
Than reflectively, stars lost and uncertain
In the sea, compared with the shining salt, the shiners,
The galaxies, the clusters, the bright grain whirling
Over the black threshing-floor of space.
Will you make some effort to believe that?

DYNAMENE. No, no effort.
It lifts me and carries me. It may be wild
But it comes to me with a charm, like trust indeed,
And eats out of my heart, dear Chromis,
Absurd, disconcerting Chromis. You make me
Feel I wish I could look my best for you.
I wish, at least, that I could believe myself
To be showing some beauty for you, to put in the scales

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Between us. But they dip to you, they sink
With masculine victory.

TEGEUS. Eros, no! No!
If this is less than your best, then never, in my presence,
Be more than your less: never! If you should bring
More to your mouth or to your eyes, a moisture
Or a flake of light, anything, anything fatally
More, perfection would fetch her unsparing rod
Out of pickle to flay me, and what would have been love
Will be the end of me. O Dynamene,
Let me unload something of my lips' longing
On to yours receiving. Oh, when I cross
Like this the hurt of the little space between us
I come a journey from the wrenching ice
To walk in the sun. That is the feeling.

DYNAMENE. Chromis,
Where am I going? No, don't answer. It's death
I desire, not you.

TEGEUS. Where is the difference? Call me
Death instead of Chromis. I'll answer to anything.
It's desire all the same, of death in me, or me
In death, but Chromis either way. Is it so?
Do you not love me, Dynamene?

DYNAMENE. How could it happen?
I'm going to my husband. I'm too far on the way
To admit myself to life again. Love's in Hades.

TEGEUS. Also here. And here are we, not there
In Hades. Is your husband expecting you?

DYNAMENE. Surely, surely?

TEGEUS. Not necessarily. I,
If I had been your husband, would never dream
Of expecting you. I should remember your body
Descending stairs in the floating light, but not
Descending in Hades. I should say 'I have left
My wealth warm on the earth, and, hell, earth needs it.'
'Was all I taught her of love,' I should say, 'so poor
That she will leave her flesh and become shadow?'

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'Wasn't our love for each other' (I should continue)
'Infused with life, and life infused with our love?
Very well; repeat me in love, repeat me in life,
And let me sing in your blood for ever.'

DYNAMENE. Stop, stop, I shall be dragged apart!
Why should the fates do everything to keep me
From dying honourably? They must have got
Tired of honour in Elysium. Chromis, it's terrible
To be susceptible to two conflicting norths.
I have the constitution of a whirlpool.
Am I actually twirling, or is it just sensation?

TEGEUS. You're still; still as the darkness.

DYNAMENE. What appears
Is so unlike what is. And what is madness
To those who only observe, is often wisdom
To those to whom it happens.

TEGEUS. Are we compelled
To go into all this?

DYNAMENE. Why, how could I return
To my friends? Am I to be an entertainment?

TEGEUS. That's for to-morrow. To-night I need to kiss you,
Dynamene. Let's see what the whirlpool does
Between my arms; let it whirl on my breast. O love,
Come in.

DYNAMENE. I am there before I reach you; my body
Only follows to join my longing which
Is holding you already.—Now I am
All one again.

DYNAMENE. I feel as the gods feel:
This is their sensation of life, not a man's:
Their suspension of immortality, to enrich
Themselves with time. O life, O death, O body,
O spirit, O Dynamene.

DYNAMENE. O all
In myself; it so covets all in you,

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My care, my Chromis. Then I shall be
Creation.

TEGEUS. You have the skies already;
Out of them you are buffeting me with your gales
Of beauty. Can we be made of dust, as they tell us?
What! dust with dust releasing such a light
And such an apparition of the world
Within one body? A thread of your hair has stung me.
Why do you push me away?

DYNAMENE. There's so much metal
About you. Do I have to be imprisoned
In an armoury?

TEGEUS. Give your hand to the buckles and then
To me.

DYNAMENE. Don't help; I'll do them all myself.

TEGEUS. O time and patience! I want you back again.

DYNAMENE. We have a lifetime. O Chromis, think, think
Of that. And even unfastening a buckle
Is loving. And not easy. Very well,
You can help me. Chromis, what zone of miracle
Did you step into to direct you in the dark
To where I waited, not knowing I waited?

TEGEUS. I saw
The lamplight. That was only the appearance
Of some great gesture in the bed of fortune.
I saw the lamplight.

DYNAMENE. But here? So far from life?
What brought you near enough to see lamplight?

TEGEUS. Zeus,
That reminds me.

DYNAMENE. What is it, Chromis?

TEGEUS. I'm on duty.

DYNAMENE. Is it warm enough to do without your greaves?

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TEGEUS. Darling loom of magic, I must go back
To take a look at those boys. The whole business
Of guard had gone out of my mind.

DYNAMENE. What boys, my heart?

TEGEUS. My six bodies.

DYNAMENE. Chromis, not that joke
Again.

TEGEUS. No joke, sweet. To-day our city
Held a sextuple hanging. I'm minding the bodies
Until five o'clock. Already I've been away
For half an hour.

DYNAMENE. What can they do, poor bodies,
In half an hour, or half a century?
You don't really mean to go?

TEGEUS. Only to make
My conscience easy. Then, Dynamene,
No cloud can rise on love, no hovering thought
Fidget, and the night will be only to *us*.

DYNAMENE. But if every half-hour——

TEGEUS. Hush, smile of my soul,
My spring, my sovereign: this is to hold your eyes,
I sign my lips on them both: this is to keep
Your forehead—do you feel the claim of my kiss
Falling into your thought? And now your throat
Is a white branch and my lips two singing birds—
They are coming to rest. Throat, remember me
Until I come back in five minutes. Over all
Here is my parole: I give it to your mouth
To give me again before it's dry. I promise:
Before it's dry, or not long after.

DYNAMENE. Run,
Run all the way. You needn't be afraid of stumbling.
There's plenty of moon. The fields are blue. Oh, wait,
Wait! My darling. No, not now: it will keep
Until I see you; I'll have it here at my lips.
Hurry.

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TEGEUS. So long, my haven.

DYNAMENE. Hurry, hurry!

[*Exit* TEGEUS.

DOTO. Yes, madam, hurry; of course. Are we there
Already? How nice. Death doesn't take
Any doing at all. We were gulped into Hades
As easy as an oyster.

DYNAMENE. Doto!

DOTO. Hurry, hurry,
Yes, madam.—But they've taken out all my bones.
I haven't a bone left. I'm a Shadow: wonderfully shady
In the legs. We shall have to sit out eternity, madam,
If they've done the same to you.

DYNAMENE. You'd better wake up.
If you can't go to sleep again, you'd better wake up.
Oh dear.—We're still alive, Doto, do you hear me?

DOTO. You must speak for yourself, madam. I'm quite dead.
I'll tell you how I know. I feel
Invisible. I'm a wraith, madam; I'm only
Waiting to be wafted.

DYNAMENE. If only you *would* be.
Do you see where you are? Look. Do you see?

DOTO. Yes. You're right, madam. We're still alive.
Isn't it enough to make you swear?
Here we are, dying to be dead,
And where does it get us?

DYNAMENE. Perhaps you should try to die
In some other place. Yes! Perhaps the air here
Suits you too well. You were sleeping very heavily.

DOTO. And all the time you alone and dying.
I shouldn't have. Has the corporal been long gone,
Madam?

DYNAMENE. He came and went, came and went,
You know the way.

DOTO. Very well I do. And went

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He should have, come he should never. Oh dear, he must
Have disturbed you, madam.

DYNAMENE. He could be said
To've disturbed me. Listen; I have something to say to you.

DOTO. I expect so, madam. Maybe I *could* have kept him out
But men are in before I wish they wasn't.
I think quickly enough, but I get behindhand
With what I ought to be saying. It's a kind of stammer
In my way of life, madam.

DYNAMENE. I have been unkind,
I have sinfully wronged you, Doto.

DOTO. Never, madam.

DYNAMENE. Oh yes. I was letting you die with me, Doto, without
Any fair reason. I was drowning you
In grief that wasn't yours. That was wrong, Doto.

DOTO. But I haven't got anything against dying, madam.
I may *like* the situation, as far as I like
Any situation, madam. Now if you'd said mangling,
A lot of mangling, I might have thought twice about staying.
We all have our dislikes, madam.

DYNAMENE. I'm asking you
To leave me, Doto, at once, as quickly as possible,
Now, before—now, Doto, and let me forget
My bad mind which confidently expected you
To companion me to Hades. Now good-bye,
Good-bye.

DOTO. No, it's not good-bye at all.
I shouldn't know another night of sleep, wondering
How you got on, or what I was missing, come to that.
I should be anxious about you, too. When you belong
To an upper class, the netherworld might come strange.
Now I was born nether, madam, though not
As nether as some. No, it's not good-bye, madam.

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DYNAMENE. Oh Doto, go; you must, you must! And if I seem
Without gratitude, forgive me. It isn't so,
It is far, far from so. But I can only
Regain my peace of mind if I know you're gone.

DOTO. Besides, look at the time, madam. Where should I go
At three in the morning? Even if I was to think
Of going; and think of it I never shall.

DYNAMENE. Think of the unmatchable world, Doto.

DOTO. I do
Think of it, madam. And when I think of it, what
Have I thought? Well, it depends, madam.

DYNAMENE. I insist,
Obey me! At once! Doto!

DOTO. Here I sit.

DYNAMENE. What shall I do with you?

DOTO. Ignore me, madam.
I know my place. I shall die quite unobtrusive.
Oh look, the corporal's forgotten to take his equipment.

DYNAMENE. Could he be so careless?

DOTO. I shouldn't hardly have thought so.
Poor fellow. They'll go and deduct it off his credits.
I suppose, madam, I suppose he couldn't be thinking
Of coming back?

DYNAMENE. He'll think of these. He will notice
He isn't wearing them. He'll come; he is sure to come.

DOTO. Oh.

DYNAMENE. I know he will.

DOTO. Oh, oh.
Is that all for to-night, madam? May I go now, madam?

DYNAMENE. Doto! Will you?

DOTO. Just you try to stop me, madam.

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Sometimes going is a kind of instinct with me.
I'll leave death to some other occasion.

DYNAMENE. Do,
Doto. Any other time. Now you must hurry.
I won't delay you from life another moment.
Oh, Doto, good-bye.

DOTO. Good-bye. Life is unusual,
Isn't it, madam? Remember me to Cerberus.
[*Re-enter* TEGEUS. DOTO *passes him on the steps.*

DOTO [*as she goes*]. You left something behind. Ye gods, what a moon!

DYNAMENE. Chromis, it's true; my lips are hardly dry.
Time runs again; the void is space again;
Space has life again; Dynamene has Chromis.

TEGEUS. It's over.

DYNAMENE. Chromis, you're sick. As white as wool.
Come, you covered the distance too quickly.
Rest in my arms; get your breath again.

TEGEUS. I've breathed one night too many. Why did I see you,
Why in the name of life did I see you?

DYNAMENE. Why?
Weren't we gifted with each other? O heart,
What do you mean?

TEGEUS. I mean that joy is nothing
But the parent of doom. Why should I have found
Your constancy such balm to the world and yet
Find, by the same vision, its destruction
A necessity? We're set upon by love
To make us incompetent to steer ourselves,
To make us docile to fate. I should have known:
Indulgences, not fulfilment, is what the world
Permits us.

DYNAMENE. Chromis, is this intelligible?
Help me to follow you. What did you meet in the fields
To bring about all this talk? Do you still love me?

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TEGEUS. What good will it do us? I've lost a body.

DYNAMENE. A body?
One of the six? Well, it isn't with them you propose
To love me; and you couldn't keep it for ever.
Are we going to allow a body that isn't there
To come between us?

TEGEUS. But I'm responsible for it.
I have to account for it in the morning. Surely
You see, Dynamene, the horror we're faced with?
The relatives have had time to cut him down
And take him away for burial. It means
A court martial. No doubt about the sentence.
I shall take the place of the missing man.
To be hanged, Dynamene! Hanged, Dynamene!

DYNAMENE. No; it's monstrous! Your life is yours, Chromis.

TEGEUS. Anything but. That's why I have to take it.
At the best we live our lives on loan,
At the worst in chains. And I was never born
To have life. Then for what? To be had by it,
And so are we all. But I'll make it what it is,
By making it nothing.

DYNAMENE. Chromis, you're frightening me.
What are you meaning to do?

TEGEUS. I have to die,
Dance of my heart, I have to die, to die,
To part us, to go to my sword and let it part us.
I'll have my free will even if I'm compelled to it.
I'll kill myself.

DYNAMENE. Oh, no! No, Chromis!
It's all unreasonable—no such horror
Can come of a pure accident. Have you hanged?
How can they hang you for simply not being somewhere?
How can they hang you for losing a dead man?
They must have wanted to lose him, or they wouldn't
Have hanged him. No, you're scaring yourself for nothing
And making me frantic.

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TEGEUS. It's section six, paragraph
Three in the Regulations. That's my doom.
I've read it for myself. And, by my doom,
Since I have to die, let me die here, in love,
Promoted by your kiss to tower, in dying,
High above my birth. For god's sake let me die
On a wave of life, Dynamene, with an action
I can take some pride in. How could I settle to death
Knowing that you last saw me stripped and strangled
On a holly tree? Demoted first and then hanged!

DYNAMENE. Am I supposed to love the corporal
Or you? It's you I love, from head to foot
And out to the ends of your spirit. What shall I do
If you die? How could I follow you? I should find you
Discussing me with my husband, comparing your feelings,
Exchanging reactions. Where should I put myself?
Or am I to live on alone, or find in life
Another source of love, in memory
Of Virilius and of you?

TEGEUS. Dynamene,
Not that! Since everything in the lives of men
Is brief to indifference, let our love at least
Echo and perpetuate itself uniquely
As long as time allows you. Though you go
To the limit of age, it won't be far to contain me.

DYNAMENE. It will seem like eternity ground into days and days.

TEGEUS. Can I be certain of you, for ever?

DYNAMENE. But, Chromis,
Surely you said——

TEGEUS. Surely we have sensed
Our passion to be greater than mortal? Must I
Die believing it is dying with me?

DYNAMENE. Chromis,
You must never die, never! It would be
An offence against truth.

TEGEUS. I cannot live to be hanged.

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It would be an offence against life. Give me my sword,
Dynamene. O Hades, when you look pale
You take the heart out of me. I could die
Without a sword by seeing you suffer. Quickly!
Give me my heart back again with your lips
And I'll live the rest of my ambitions
In a last kiss.

DYNAMENE. Oh, no, no, no!
Give my blessing to your desertion of me?
Never, Chromis, never. Kiss you and then
Let you go? Love you, for death to have you?
Am I to be made the fool of courts martial?
Who are they who think they can discipline souls
Right off the earth? What discipline is that?
Chromis, love is the only discipline
And we're the disciples of love. I hold you to that:
Hold you, hold you.

TEGEUS. We have no chance. It's determined
In section six, paragraph three, of the Regulations.
That has more power than love. It can snuff the great
Candles of creation. It makes me able
To do the impossible, to leave you, to go from the light
That keeps you.

DYNAMENE. No!

TEGEUS. O dark, it does. Good-bye,
My memory of earth, my dear most dear
Beyond every expectation. I was wrong
To want you to keep our vows existent
In the vacuum that's coming. It would make you
A heaviness to the world, when you should be,
As you are, a form of light. Dynamene, turn
Your head away. I'm going to let my sword
Solve all the riddles.

DYNAMENE. Chromis, I have it! I know!
Virilius will help you.

TEGEUS. Virilius?

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DYNAMENE. My husband. He can be the other body.

TEGEUS. Your husband can?

DYNAMENE. He has no further use
For what he left of himself to lie with us here.
Is there any reason why he shouldn't hang
On your holly tree? Better, far better, he,
Than you who are still alive, and surely better
Than *idling* into corruption?

TEGEUS. Hang your husband?
Dynamene, it's terrible, horrible.

DYNAMENE. How little you can understand. I loved
His life not his death. And now we can give his death
The power of life. Not horrible: wonderful!
Isn't it so? That I should be able to feel
He moves again in the world, accomplishing
Our welfare? It's more than my grief could do.

TEGEUS. What can I say?

DYNAMENE. That you love me; as I love him
And you. Let's celebrate your safety then.
Where's the bottle? There's some wine unfinished in this bowl.
I'll share it with you. Now forget the fear
We were in; look at me, Chromis. Come away
From the pit you nearly dropped us in. My darling,
I give you Virilius.

TEGEUS. Virilius.
And all that follows.

DOTO [*on the steps, with the bottle*]. The master. Both the masters.

CURTAIN

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Notes on English Verse Drama: Christopher Fry

WILLIAM ARROWSMITH

RECENTLY—November last— the *World Review* submitted to Mr. Eliot fourteen questions about *The Cocktail Party*. The questions were of mixed merit, and the more impertinent of them were parried by the appropriate Possum (asked if he intended the play to be regarded as a criticism of a formless society, he replied: "I intended to produce characters whose drawing room behaviour was generally correct"). It was, of course, Mr. Eliot who answered these questions:

> Q: *The Cocktail Party* has no chorus and is in many respects not unlike the conventional "sophisticated" comedy of marital misunderstanding. Would you say what your reasons were for adopting this form as it now stands?
>
> A: I want people to forget that they are listening to a poetic play. A present-day audience, which realises that it is listening to a play in verse, cannot be expected to have the right attitude to what I am trying to do.
>
> Q: Do you think the age is turning towards the poetic drama and away from the scientific-analytical, the "realistic," and that the audience for poetic drama already shows signs of growing?
>
> A: I think it is too early to say whether the audience for poetic drama is growing. I think that the question should not be put in terms of "realistic" and whatever may be supposed to be the antithesis of "realism". . . . It seems to me that we should turn away from the Theater of Ideas to the Theater of Character. The essential poetic play should be made with human beings rather than ideas. It is not for the dramatist to produce an analysed character, but for the audience to analyse the character. When the dramatist is creative, then the more creative the dramatist, the greater varieties of interpretation will be possible.

These replies, if I understand them correctly, should surprise no one, for Eliot, as a dramatist, has not been an intransigent poet, nor a fanatic of the theater of ideas. Yet they are curiously bald

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pronouncements of an acceptance, without condescension, of an audience first, and *thence* of a genre. I say "without condescension" since Eliot intends no dilution, and none should be felt in the play; the latitude of interpretation allowed is the corollary of writing for as many audiences as possible at one time. There may be, though there need not be, an ultimate condescension, yet it hardly matters; what does matter is the maximum use of what, by association, we tend to think of as minimal forms. From that will follow the other considerations, and it is among these conclusions that the play had best be judged.

However, it is difficult to know what harder or more important task Mr. Eliot could have set himself: the ambiguity of the word or the phrase is one thing, that of the whole work, another. In drama—anywhere in literature, for that matter—for writers and audiences alike, there is, it seems to me, no other single experiment that should more command our sympathy and criticism than this, the willful recreation of forms thought unusable, and so, a greater guile in the service of the four or five novels or plays that will go to make up the composite novel, the single play. By adding guile to the artist's craft, we are asking for nothing more than professional dramatists, dramatists who are concerned to write plays that will be widely and, if possible, popularly attended, without consequent dilution of craftsmanship. To some, art and guile may seem antitheses, but it is only in a period when, for obvious reasons, the purity of art has been given false attributes, that craftsmanship has not included guile in itself, if by guile we mean merely a sense of wiles and stratagem: practical craft.

Mr. Eliot's role as a man-of-many-wiles has not generally been canonized, although it is likely that his peculiar subject matter has forced him to stratagems which must seem, in view of the comparative richness of the English theater, somewhat desperate. In this he is, or should be, closer to the predicament of his American colleagues. That is, Americans, I think, will appreciate the significance of the genre of *The Cocktail Party* more readily than the English, if only because the communication of any subject matter is as desperate a business in America as Mr. Eliot's religious *agon* in semi-secular England. Therefore, it should not be regarded as strange that, at the time of Eliot's newer departure, the comparative liveliness of the English stage should have produced in Christopher Fry a professional verse dramatist of con-

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siderable popular success and outstanding poetic ability who, on the face of it, seems such a far cry from Eliot. Yet whatever Mr. Fry's ultimate luck on the American stage may be, it is more than improbable that the American theater, in its present corruption, could either have produced Fry or encouraged him. As for Mr. Fry in England, the question is not whether he will eventually have to adopt Mr. Eliot's stratagem, but whether he will be able to marry his present popularity to maturer plays by some stratagem of his own making.

I

Verse drama in England is, for the most part, the history of Eliot's practical craft. Christopher Fry is hardly alone in his debt to Eliot's example and to Eliot's famous bag of dramatic tricks, the *Dialogue on Dramatic Poetry;* there is hardly a verse dramatist of talent who does not, in some way or other, derive from Eliot's determination to have a verse drama. His disciples scatter broadcast from the suggestions of the *Dialogue*: the notes connecting the form of the ballet and the drama were taken up by Auden and Isherwood; from the notes on dramatic liturgy derive, I think, Anne Ridler's nativity play, *The Shadow Factory,* Ronald Duncan's masque and anti-masque, *This Way to the Tomb,* as well as Fry's two festival plays, *The Boy With a Cart* and *Thor With Angels.* And this debt was further deepened by Eliot's own example, *Murder in the Cathedral,* and its fantastic success (it ran over eight hundred performances in little more than two years). When dramatists did not accept Eliot's suggestions, they appropriated his manner, and a moment's glance at the plays of Norman Nicholson, Duncan, Ridler, or at Fry's earliest will show how strong the hold of Eliot was on his juniors. Thus younger dramatists were faced, not only with the problem of writing verse drama, but also with the difficulty of shaking off Eliot's stylistic hold. Only Christopher Fry, and, perhaps, Auden have managed to shake themselves free and it was no accident that Fry did so by looking to the example of that lonely figure, Charles Williams, and before Williams, to the plays of Beddoes.

How many of these recent experiments in various dramatic forms will ripen into usable genres, it is still too early to say. None of them, however, has yet been exploited fully, or even

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happily, although MacNeice seems to be approaching a mastery of the broadcast-play. It may, then, be unreasonable to suggest that most of these forms, for the time being, represent dramatic dead-ends. Yet I think they provoke too much the artist's protective purity; they keep him secure from his audience since his audience is too insecure in the form to judge him properly; it is too easy for him to play the poet with his play, to substitute choral trappings or lyric monologues for a working dramatic diction, and the audience is too apt to think these substitutions justified by the mysterious form employed. In this sense, experiment tends to protect that dramatist from his own shortcomings or mistakes although, like the festival play, it may sustain his original intentions. But eventually, if he is going to better the conditions of his craft, he will have to compete—as Fry and Eliot are now doing—with the tawdry musicals and the pedestrian prose of the commercial theater, not on his own terms, but on his own standards, and theirs too—if he can manage it.

If he cannot, in England, it will not matter greatly for a few years, since the audiences (or one or two of them) are somewhat more prepared than American audiences to accept the dramatists' standards at their true value. Yet the differences between the English and the American theaters can be too much heightened; in any case, English audiences have so far shown a regrettable hospitality to the worst products of the American market, and the West End theater is, on the whole, only slightly less corrupt in its standards than its American counterpart. It is true that exemption from entertainment tax for those theaters staging plays of "cultural value" has stimulated activity and has been responsible for several otherwise unlikely programmes. Yet the most important asset to the English verse-dramatist is that he is the heir to the accumulated advantages of the repertory and little-theater movement: a generation of intense activity among both amateur and professional groups, standards of performance incredibly high, serious lay interest and enthusiasm, and now, government patronage and a new (and perhaps dangerous) security from the entertainment industry. It was Granville-Barker who remarked of the repertory movement that new talents would now "enter the theater through a breach already made from within—begun a generation back and gradually widened—whereby past masterpieces were again given the benefit

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of their own stagecraft." And so it was. But even beyond this, the real advantage of the repertory movement to the dramatist was the education of his craft by its past classics, and the accompanying education of actors and audience alike in the same school. For it is on the basis of audiences, actors and dramatists educated in common in the practical craft of the theater that verse-dramatists in England can now hope to compete in the commercial field for their potential audiences.

This does not mean that they can succeed without great talent, or great luck, or that their integrity is necessarily immune from consequent corruption. What it does mean is that the English dramatist, unlike his American opposite, does not have upon himself the weight of the whole job, except in quite special circumstances. The ground has already been broken for him, and although the dramatic education which he has in common with audience and actors may not go very deep, it should nonetheless be possible to write good drama out of it. If it is not possible, there is always Eliot's new example.

For the American dramatist, since he lacks precisely those advantages which the English dramatist has, the situation is so much the more desperate. What that situation is, is well known: in no field of literary activity is failure so conspicuous; no literary form is so shackled to a commercial prison; and nowhere is the defeating rationalization that "conditions" are inexorable in such high repute among those who cherish the possibility of an imaginative theater. The measures that should be taken are by now, I believe, self-evident: the initiative remains with the dramatist, waits his practical craft. There is no one else.

Criticism is clearly an essential part of that practical craft, and there is evidence that, in this respect, America is more fortunate than England. I refer not to daily reviewing in the newspapers, but to the maieutic work of such critics as Bentley, Downer and Fergusson. In England, at the moment, there are no critics of equal acuity, excepting Eliot himself, and the regular reviewers, with the possible exception of T. C. Worsley of *The New Statesman,* are regularly atrocious. This may be because effective dramatic criticism takes place elsewhere: after Shaw, the tradition of dramatic criticism passed to playwright-producers like Granville-Barker, and thence to directors like E. Martin Browne or to actor-producers like Gielgud and Olivier.

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Such criticism, though it takes place behind the scenes, is nonetheless effective and eventually public. Verse drama itself is perpetually in debt to actors who, like Gielgud, were sympathetic from the start, and who were in a position to experiment as well as to criticize. Yet something more is needed—perhaps a less explicitly theatrical criticism—and at the moment there is nothing of the sort. Rather, the worst kind of impressionism prevails, without service either to audiences, actors, or dramatists.

Take the case of Christopher Fry: to my knowledge he has received no extensive or detailed criticism anywhere and what notices have appeared generally manage to say this sort of thing: *an irrelevant rhetorician . . . a fancy phrase-maker . . . writes plays based on bubbling words alone . . . clever vers de société . . . a happy marriage of Shaw and Shakespeare . . . resurrection of the genius of English comedy in the tradition of Congreve . . . Fry's theater is a dance of words. In his plays people come and go, but if they tango, it is only with their tongues . . . a juggle of words . . . Fry's is the civilized mind foreseeing old walls without creepers, colleges without port . . . he ought to write in prose.* And so on. Of *Venus Observed*, his latest play: . . . *ill-told . . . a Shavian atmosphere . . . facetiae tended to be Anglo-Catholic in the manner of T. S. Eliot . . . the melancholy of Venus Observed is that of the Elgar Cello Concerto and Brideshead Revisited.* And so on. Not, on the whole, an unfavorable press: merely fatuous.

II

In calling these remarks fatuous, I do not propose that the fatuity should be redeemed by finding in Fry a metaphysical dramatist; he is not. But he is not therefore a mere phrase-maker any more than he is Shavian or Eliotic or what-have-you. If there must be a metaphor, let it be Marlowe, for this says something about the texture of Fry's drama, if not of his verse: there is the same verbal impatience, the laddering of effects toward an over-all tonal roof, and the exuberance and extravagance of the autonomous language which is only an extension of the theme itself. It is this very identity of language and theme in Fry's three comedies which has misled the critics, made them doubt the existence of a controlling theme or attitude and then proceed to pillory Fry for mere verbal vanity. In a way, their temptation is hard to resist, for Fry's verse is distractingly autonomous in a

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bad sense as well: it tends to make its own drama and, by its promiscuous, its indiscriminate, brilliance, to live a life of its own apart from the play. If Fry's purpose is to be served, his verse must occasionally hang fire—more than it does—or the brilliance becomes ambiguous; and the problem is theatrical as well as dramatic. If you accept Fry's purpose—the refurbishing of a mystery gone tarnished, overdomesticated—the problem of the degree of charged language becomes even more crucial than it is for most verse drama. It is the *kind* of mystery, of course, that counts: Eliot too is after a mystery but he has come to the point where "the poetry does not matter"; but if you want, like Fry, to carry your world and your mystery in "full fig," the poetry is everything.

Fry's purpose is quite simple and it is to his critics' shame that he should have had to state it publicly, for it is implicit and explicit in every play: "What we call reality is a false god, the dull eye of custom. . . . For a long time now, the theater has pursued this 'reality,' the reality we have made for ourselves by two million years of getting used to it: the domestication of the enormous miracle . . . but the truth, surely, the greater reality, is that we should be out of place. . . . And this reality is the province of poetry." There is nothing spectacular in this; it is the programme of much poetry, not sentimental or anti-intellectual, as Fry's critics have thought, but pre-intellectual, like Stevens's "first idea" ("You must become an ignorant man again/ And see the sun again with an ignorant eye/ and see it clearly in the idea of it") or Mrs. Langer's "life symbols." The quality of the reality created is, of course, determined by the quality of the poetry and it is in this sense that Fry's language and his subject are coterminous. Those characters who control the theme control the theme's language:

> *Nothing can be seen*
> *In the thistle-down, but the rough-head thistle comes.*
> *Rest in that riddle. I can pass to you*
> *Generations of roses in this wrinkled berry.*
> *There: now you hold in your hand a race*
> *Of summer gardens, it fades under centuries*
> *Of petals. What is not, you have in your palm.*
> *Rest in the riddle, rest; why not?*

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. . . . . .

By God, a cuckoo! Grief and God,
A canting cuckoo, that laugh with no smile!
A world unable to die sits on and on
In spring sunlight, hatching egg after egg,
Hoping against hope that out of one of them
Will come the reason for it all; and always
Out pops the arid chuckle and centuries
Of cuckoo-spit.

. . . . . .

So no remorse,
Rosabel. I love my love and my love loves me.
Everything goes but everything comes.
We fall away into a future, and all
The seven seas, and the milky way
And morning, and evening, and hi-cockalorum are in it.

And so it goes on its way, flamboyant, pulsive, finessing its mystery by verbal bravura and a high rhetoric that is unfortunately rare in modern poetry.

Consider his language further. Its texture will, I think, prove stubborn to our customary canons of ambiguity and exfoliate meaning. It is far more open-cast—Spenserian or Marlovian, if a name is wanted; the imagery is available and explicative, the symbolism primary but more intensive than the imagery. Such open-cast language, if it is to flourish side by side with our more involved and ingrown literary idiom, must take, I think, eventually to some kind of self-mockery; it likes to cancel—or, rather, qualify—its own explicit exorbitance and it does this in Fry either with a fantastic whimsy (Jessie Dill in *Venus;* Margaret in *The Lady*) or with a prosy counter-voice or a pedestrian character taking to high metaphor. Thus Dynamene's dream of her ship-shape husband, Virilius:

Ah, I'm breathless. I caught up with the ship
But it spread its wings, creaking a cry of Dew,
Dew! *and flew figurehead foremost into the sun.*

is countered by her maid's delicious

How crazy, madam.

And the routine-happy Tyson, when he exclaims, in exasperation,

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Almighty
God more precise than a clockmaker;
Grant us all a steady pendulum.

is countered with thematic mockery:

Listen! The wild music of the spheres:
Tick-tock.

Or again the marvelous oxymoron of prose and poetry in Jennet's

Once when the moon
Was gibbous and in a high dazed state
Of nimbus love, I shook a jonquil's dew
On to a pearl and let a cricket chirp
Three times, thinking of pale Peter:
And there Titania was, vexed by a cloud
Of pollen, using the sting of a bee to clean
Her nails and singing, as drearily as a gnat,
"Why try to keep clean?"

Again and again, throughout Fry's comedies, the humor takes this form of a comic, yet thematic, dialectic between the prose and the poetry, the classic type of which is whimsy. As such, the humor is an essential part of Fry's purpose and one more instance of his marriage of language to theme. Prose comments on poetry, the mystery mocks the mundane, death proses life, and all turn about as well: out of these the comedy comes. It is almost all summed up in the lover's despair with the Regulations that thwart him:

We have no chance. It's determined
In section six, paragraph three, of the Regulations.
That has more power than love. It can snuff the great
Candles of creation.

It is in dialectic like this that the matrix of Fry's great comic ability lies; the comedy is not merely an adjunct to the theme, or an ornament of the language; it is the language-theme in action, its very life in its struggle with its counterpart, the exemplar of the great dualist oxymoron of prose and poetry, death and life, and the other paired antagonists. To see it this way, I think, is to glimpse Fry's artistic economy and his practical craft, for it seems to me that his comic success is the direct result

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of his taking the initial and temporary disadvantage of his own high rhetoric—its embarrassment and self-consciousness in a time of intensive multiple statement—and deliberately putting it to the mockery of its natural antagonist. This discovery and its development, conscious or unconscious, made him a dramatist and marks off his secular (why not?) comedies from his tragedy, *The Firstborn,* and his two undistinguished festival plays.

As one might expect, Fry's sets and his stage symbolism show a similar economy in the use of large strokes. The story of the Ephesian matron in Petronius which forms the plot of *A Phoenix Too Frequent* almost necessitates a tomb as the set and of course invites symbolic treatment, a chiaroscuro of death and life, day and night, from which the Phoenix, love, rises from its ashes, and death, in the person of the husband's corpse, is put to the rescue of life. Fry has not yet written a more perfect play; slight, it may be, but the wit, the language, the set—all do their proper work and prosecute the theme with such implicit loyalty and exactitude that there is no need of direct statement. Further, the play is—at least in the production in which I saw it—eminently theatrical; if it has failed in New York, as I hear it has, the responsibility is not Fry's.

Fry's two later comedies, *The Lady's Not for Burning* and *Venus Observed,* are rather more ambitious in their attempt to gather up the theme more fully or to consider its variations. Consequently the symbolism becomes more dense, the verbiage more lush; there is an accretion in the depth of the theme, but the plays, as plays, seem to me less coherent than the *Phoenix.* I think this is partly due to the tendency of the verse to become more a vehicle of the theme than the theme's exemplar; the effort to state the theme explicitly ends, strangely enough, in upstaging the drama. However magnificent the poetry may be, *The Lady's Not for Burning* proceeds too much by lyric monologues; and as the moral intent of the dramatist takes shape, the old dialectic seems to be the loser. Rather we have a number of magnificent, but undramatic, monodies of this sort:

> *I've been cast adrift on a raft of melancholy*
> *The night-wind passed me, like a sail across*
> *A blind man's eye. There it is,*
> *The interminable tumbling of the great grey*
> *Main of moonlight, washing over*

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The little oyster-shell of this month of April:
Among the raven-quills of the shadows
And on the white pillows of men asleep:
The night's a pale pastureland of peace,
And something condones the world, incorrigibly.
But what, in fact, is *this vaporous charm?*
We're softened by a nice conglomeration
Of the earth's uneven surface, refraction of light,
Obstruction of light . . . etc. etc.

And it is through monodies of this sort, I am afraid, that Thomas' acceptance of the human situation, and Jennet's conversion to the irrational riddle of the great world are effected. This seems to me to ask too much of poetry, too little of dramatic form; the theme remains untested, too much a persuasive definition. Everything else in which the theme could receive its maximum testing is nicely composed, but the test of it does not come clean. The set said everything it should have: a dark room which gave on a garden, a great window on the double world outside—Jennet's witch-hunting world and Thomas' fantastic mystery revealed in the garden and the light. Out of that light, a kind of Renaissance set (the play is timed to "1400, either more or less exactly"), into the medieval room, comes Alizon Eliot, the natural initiate of the theme:

Coming in from the light, I am all out at the eyes.
Such white doves were paddling in the sunshine
And the trees were as bright as a shower of broken glass.
. . . . . *I've an April blindness,*
You're hidden in a cloud of crimson catherine-wheels.

Then Richard:

It doesn't really matter. Sit in the shadow.

And Thomas:

There are plenty to choose from.

The elaborations of this technical ingenuity are endless, but they are props to a performance which is more potential than realized. Fry has not yet given his theme the test of which he and it are capable.

It is, I think, characteristic of Fry's theme that it should pro-

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vide him, not only with a kind of verse and diction, but also with a rough-working initial morality for his characters. Not only do those who control the theme control its language, but those characters who have any moral function at all in the plays take their moral quality according to their state of grace with regard to the theme. Thus the unattractive characters, like Dominic in *Venus Observed* or Humphrey in *The Lady,* are not specifically evil; they are rather merely too habituated to the mystery, custom's creatures, routine-bound, clock-ridden, and prosaic. The nearest Fry gets to a more orthodox evil is in the witch-hunt of *The Lady* or in the more theological condemnation of Dominic as one who thinks more of "the sin than the sinner." The question, it seems to me, is not whether Fry's thematic morality might better be replaced by some other, but whether he can bring himself to mock his theme as seriously as he mocked his verse, to give his antagonist some real strength—if he can imagine such a possible antagonist. It is this lack of a real moral conflict in this sense—the pitting of a great riddle against a pitiful platitude—that is the basis of Fry's most outstanding weakness. His certitude needs to be tested by a real conflict—gods and devils, if you like—and not to be dribbled away in a rhetorical victory for the riddle and poetic pity for its opposite. The Aeschylean theodicy is, after all, a riddle which had to be tested by the *Oresteia,* that hardest test of any riddle, before it was vindicated; and there is, I suppose, an appropriate test, by comedy, of Mr. Fry's riddle—if it deserves the name.

Venus Observed, Fry's latest play, exhibits quite clearly all his strength and weakness. Fry himself, I believe, prefers to think of the play as a comedy of climate and it is quite true that it differs sharply from the other comedies. How well that climate came through in the theater, I am not prepared to say, for the Olivier production seemed to me not altogether successful. The actors shied from the verse in several cases, the bluff comic parts of Bates and Reddleman did not come through, and there seemed to be some serious miscasting—especially in the marvelous part of the whimsical luller, Jessie Dill. The plot, however, is slight in itself and I suspect that Fry is somewhat responsible for the theatrical shortcomings; in any case, the actors in several scenes were visibly hard put to keep up the business of the stage while the verse ran on on its own business.

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The climate of the comedy is the autumn of love and, by strong implication, an autumn chill in a dying Eden. A fantastic old duke, a Sagittarian centaur, resigned to a pale monogamy, invites three of his former mistresses to the palace so that his son may perform the judgment of Paris for him. With the arrival—during an eclipse—of the perpetual Venus or Diana (no matter), the daughter of his filching bailiff, the Duke finds his autumnal mood committed to love, and finds, moreover, that his son intends to perform the judgment of Paris for himself. Follow verbal skirmishes in the Temple of the Ancient Virtues; Perpetua is tempted to the Duke's bedroom-observatory where she is offered Paris' apple metamorphosed into the apple of Eden. The wing of the house in which they are is fired by a jealous mistress; Perpetua gently rejects the Duke and the Duke contents himself with marrying the jealous mistress.

It would be merely repetitious to point out the verbal and technical felicities of the play; but anyone who will examine it closely will find a great richening of texture over the other works. There is the same symbolic stagecraft: the observatory with its obscene telescope, once the bedroom of the amorous Duke, who has taken to the survey of the great world in his autumnal years; the everlasting apple which appears as Paris' apple, Eden's apple, magic apple (it is Hallowe'en), the apple of Atalanta, and in its Eden aspect, appears to point up the pathos of the Temple of Ancient Virtues, *our* decaying Eden; or the great chiaroscuro of Perpetua's appearance—from America, of all places—in the English eclipse, and the work-back from Perpetua as Venus to the star seen through the Duke's telescope to Christian Lucifer and so to Eden again. There is the perpetual verse, the Duke's love springing from its ashes, Perpetua, the secular *lux perpetua* of the great riddle, and its human wisdom:

Shall I be happy for myself?
In the name of existence I'll be happy for myself.
Why, Reedbeck, how marvellous it is to moulder.
Think how you would have felt when you were lying
Grubbing in your mother's womb,
With only a wall to look at,
If you could have seen in your embryonic eye
The realm of bryony, sloes, rose-hips,

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And a hedge's ruin, a golden desuetude,
A countryside like a drowned angel
. . . . . *Think, Reedbeck,*
Think of the wonder of such glimmering woe;
How in a field of milk-white haze the lost
Apollo glows and wanders toward noon;
The wind-blown webs are brighter,
The rolling apples warmer than the sun.
Heavens! you would have cried, the womb
Echoing round you: these are the heavens, and I
Reedbeck, am stillborn. Would you not?

And:

Who am I, in heaven's name, to decide
Which were my vintage years of love?
Good God, to differentiate between
The first bright blow on my sleeping flesh,
The big breasts of mid-morning,
And the high old dance of afternoon—
Value one against the other? Never, not I,
Till the eschatological rain shall lay my dust.

These are the play, its climate.

In the face of such verse, it is almost ungrateful to criticize, or pointless, for a poet like this should be bound to make his own way regardless of what we say or where we should like him to go. Yet, as things now stand, Fry's great achievement is his verse, and not yet his plays. His example is heartening, for he has a way of making capital of his own deficiencies; he has a practical craft which is being used, significantly, for an end similar to Eliot's but by different means. Anyone who doubts this practical craft should watch an ordinary audience come under the intent and the sound of his language, as though they had never heard it before, yet understood it. In Fry's case, the *charisma* and the craft are the same thing.

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I Cry, Love! Love!

THEODORE ROETHKE

1.

Went weeping, little bones. But where?
Wasps come when I ask for pigeons.
The sister sands, they slipper soft away.
What else can befall?

Delight me otherly, white spirit,—
Some errand obscure as the wind's circuit,
A secret to jerk from the lips of a fish.
Is circularity such a shame?
A cat goes wider.

What's a thick? Two-by-two's a shape.
This toad could waltz on a drum:
I hear a most lovely huzza:
I'm king of the boops!

2.

Reason? That dreary shed, that hutch for grubby schoolboys!
The hedge-wren's song says something else.
I care for a cat's cry and the hugs live as water.
I've traced these words in sand with a vestigial tail;
Now the gills are beginning to cry.
Such a sweet noise: I can't sleep for it.
Bless me and the maze I'm in!
Hello, thingy spirit.

Mouse, mouse, come out of the ferns,
And small mouths, stay your aimless cheeping:
A lapful of apples sleeps in this grass.
That anguish of concreteness!—
The sun playing on loam,
And the first dust of spring listing over backlots,—
I proclaim, once more, a condition of joy.
Walk into the wind, willie!

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In a sodden place, all raps and knocks approve.
A dry cry comes from my own desert:
The bones are lonely.
Beginnings start without shade,
Thinner than minnows.
The live grass whirls with the sun,
Feet run over the simple stones,
There's time enough.
Behold, in the lout's eye,
Love.

3.

I hear the owls, the soft callers, coming down from the hemlocks.
The bats weave in and out of the willows,
Wing-crooked and sure,
Downward and upward,
Dipping and veering close to the motionless water.

A fish jumps, shaking out flakes of moonlight.
A single wave starts lightly and easily shoreward,
Wrinkling between reeds in shallower water,
Lifting a few twigs and floating leaves,
Then washing up over small stones.

The shine on the face of the lake
Tilts, backward and forward.
The water recedes slowly,
Gently rocking.

Who untied the tree? I remember now.
We met in a nest. Before I lived.
The dark hair sighed.
We never enter
Alone.

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The Primary Illusions and the Great Orders of Art

SUSANNE K. LANGER

ALL ART is the creation of forms expressive of human feeling, from the primitive sense of vitality that goes with breathing and moving one's limbs, or even suddenly resting, to the poignant emotions of love and grief and ecstasy. The essential unity of the arts is vouched for by this large and single purpose, and really requires no other explanation. What is difficult to understand is the selective character of artistic talent. Few creative artists are equally gifted in even two realms of art. Leonardo, for all his versatility, was above all a painter; his poetry, from any other pen than the great painter's, would hardly have stood the test of five hundred years. Wagner would certainly not have impressed his generation as poet or dramatist without his musical fame. William Blake, equally great as poet and painter, always comes to mind in this connection just because he is a notable exception to the rule. Talent is normally restricted to one artistic domain. No matter how positively we proclaim the identity of all arts, in practice we do not turn to Picasso for musical education, nor expect to learn painting from Kreisler, nor study ballet under T. S. Eliot. And that is not because the techniques are too specialized for one man to master; painting is technically as different from sculpture as it is from piano playing; but it is near to sculpture and far from piano playing, because the primary illusion it creates is virtual space, and what music creates is something else. Music is of a different order of imagination, and even if it were made with hammer and chisel on a stone that emitted sounds, it would be music, not sculpture.

The function of plastic art—"to make space visible, and its continuity sensible," as Hildebrand stated it—has been generally overlooked, because a much less important but more obvious function commanded people's first interest: imitation of things that are visible in actuality (which space is not). Music, too, is

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theoretically misunderstood because an obvious approach to it presents itself at once, and blocks our view of what a musician really creates. The wrong premises here are not as naïve as the copy-theory of visual art, but they lead, I think, to an equally unenlightening analysis. They are, in brief, that the elements of music are tones, whose essential characters are pitch, duration, loudness, and timbre (tone-color depending on overtones); that these tones are combined by the composer to yield patterns of sound, characterized as melody, harmony, and rhythm. Complex patterns, exemplifying all these characters, are works of music, which act upon our sensibilities, and stimulate our emotions. To "understand" a piece of music is to recognize its factors, which are, of course, more subtle than this bare outline indicates, but belong in the general categories here named.

What, then, is *created* in music? Apparently nothing; tones are produced, but tones are actual phenomena, and their somatic effects are actual, like the effects of contact with warm or cold objects, the smell of perfume, etc. According to this view, musical composition should be a science rather than an art. That theory has, indeed, been seriously entertained.

Yet music is the most enthralling, i.e. illusionistic, phenomenon in the world. What we hear in listening to sounds "musically" is not their specific pitch and loudness, duration and timbre. Often we are not even specifically aware of melody, harmony, or rhythmic figure, yet the music is perfectly meaningful. What we hear is what Hanslick has properly described as "*tönend bewegte Formen*"—"sounding forms in motion." We hear movement and rest, swift movement or slow, stop, attack, direction, parallel and contrary motion, melody rising or soaring or sinking, harmonies crowding or resolving or clashing; moving forms in continuous flux.

But in all this progressive motion there is actually nothing that moves. Here a word may be in order to forestall a popular fallacy: namely, that the motion is actual because strings or air-columns and the air around them move. But such motion is not what we perceive. Vibration is minute, very fast, and without direction—or rather, its direction is back and forth, in an infinitesimal space. The motion of tonal forms, however, is large and directed toward some point of relative rest. In a simple passage like the following:

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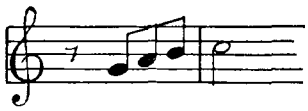
the three eighth notes progress *up* to the tonic C. But in actuality there is nothing that moves up. The C is their point of rest; yet physically there is faster motion during the time we hear the C than there was while we heard the three tones going up to it. The motion of sounding forms, like the forms themselves—everything, in fact, but the sounding—is sheer appearance, illusion. The forms are virtual, their motion is virtual, and the whole composition is a semblance.

Music is a semblance of Time in its passage. What it creates is an order of virtual time, defined and organized by the illusion of motion. Music makes time audible, and its continuity sensible. It does this by virtue of its basic abstraction, sounding forms in motion, or *kinetic tonal forms.*

Just as the space of experience is not the space of geometry, so experienced time is not the time we establish by clocks. Our actual subjective time-perception is even more composite, pragmatic, and incomplete than our space-perception. Clock time is a highly simplified abstraction from experienced time; scientific time is a refinement of clock time. Both share one basic formal property that results from the intellectual economy they serve—they are both conceived as having but one dimension. Modern scientific time, in fact, *is* one dimension of a greater relational construction.

All this is very far from time as we know it in direct experience, where it has many characteristics. Experiential time is essentially *passage,* or the feeling of transience. That is, I believe, what Bergson meant by "duration," as opposed to scientific time which he regarded as "spatialized" and thereby falsified, because space seemed to him less real than time. Why space should be less real is hard to understand, but his doctrine has a true intent none the less: for "spatialized" time is time conceived through a *metaphor* from space experience, and the time-concept thus attained is "clock time" in the broadest sense, culminating in the useful but artificial construction we call "scientific time." It is not based on the feeling of passage, but on the comparison of physical *states* and the observation of differences between them. States

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are ranged in an order of before and after; the contrasts they present are the measure of *change*. What lies between two states is not observed, but left vague, because its exact conception is unnecessary to the formalization of a measurable time. Just because actual passage is not conceived, "clock time" is homogeneous and simple and may be treated as one-dimensional.

Experiential time, on the other hand, is not simple at all. Besides the property we commonly call "length," and treat as its one dimension, it has another that I can only denote, metaphorically, as *volume*. Subjectively, a unit of time may be great or small as well as long or short. The slang phrase "a big time" is psychologically more accurate than "a pleasant time" or "a quickly-passed time." It is this voluminousness of the direct experience of passage that makes it, as Bergson says, indivisible. But even its volume is not simple; for it is filled with its own characteristic forms, as space is filled with material forms; and each order is really conceivable only because it is divided by the things in it, whereby it may be noted and measured. The forms that fill time are *tensions*—physical, emotional, or intellectual. Time exists for us because we experience tensions and their resolutions. Their peculiar building-up, and their ways of breaking or diminishing or merging into longer and greater tensions, make for a vast variety of temporal forms. If we could undergo only single, successive organic strains, perhaps subjective time would be one-dimensional, like the scientific time ticked off by clocks. But life is always a dense fabric of concurrent tensions, and as each of them is a measure of time, the measurements themselves do not coincide. This causes our time-experience to fall apart into incommensurate elements which cannot all be perceived together as clear forms. If one is taken as parameter others become "irrational," out of focus, ineffable. Some tensions, therefore, always sink into the background; some drive and some drag, but for perception they give *quality* rather than form to the passage of time, which unfolds in the pattern of the dominant and distinct strain whereby we are measuring it.

Subjective time is perceived in actual life only in a haphazard and confused way. For practical purposes we largely ignore it and let the formal measurements of the clock predominate, because they are designed pragmatically in the universal framework of astronomical events, so that we can all agree on them. Like

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actual space, which we measure in geometric abstraction or else accept vaguely as a mixture of views, things, and places, so actual time is either a scientific datum or a confused experience of physical and mental strains—of waiting, expectation, fulfillment, surprise. It has no unified perceptual form, no clear continuity.

The creation of a self-contained temporal order, continuous, all-inclusive, and entirely given in direct experience, is the business of music. The elements of music therefore are sensuous images of the tensions and resolutions which constitute *passage* for us; and those sensuous images, creating the semblance of passage, are tonal forms in virtual motion. By these the illusion of time is achieved and its experiential character set forth—its complexity, density, and volume, its interwoven elements and indivisible flow.

If, now, we turn to the standard analysis of music and are confronted again by the inventory of its constituents—tones having definite degrees of duration and pitch, by virtue of which they may be composed into rhythmic, melodic, and harmonic patterns, enhanced by variations of loudness and timbre—we see that this study begins with musical materials, not musical elements. But it lacks an adequate principle for admitting or excluding materials. The sounds of a snaredrum, which have neither definite pitch nor controllable duration, cannot really be classed as "tones" at all. Rhythm, supposedly their main contribution, is achieved by leaving exact intervals *between* them, i.e. by silences. Is silence to be a constituent? Moreover, there is music that loses much of its character when it is separated from words; but words, though they are sounds, make "musical" patterns only in a derivative sense, for they are not tones. Is such music a hybrid art?

Materials are actual, and their properties are fixed. Elements, on the other hand, are virtual, for they are constituents of the total semblance. The question of what is or is not a musical element is easily answered with reference to the primary illusion: anything is a musical element that enters into the illusion—that serves to create, support, and organize the virtual image of time. The materials of which musical elements are made may be tones or atonal sounds, silence, speech, even dramatic actions motivating changes of theme. There is no legislating as to what shall be material for music. Once the primary illusion has been ex-

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perienced, there are many materials, and probably many primitive sources of the art it begets. The musical mind finds music everywhere—in speech, in nature, in the rhythms of work; and so it uses everything resonant, from the human voice to the bowstring and the hollow drum, to make the passage of time audible and its forms expressive.

There are certain kindred arts, that create the same primary illusion in different modes. The subject is too extensive to be introduced here, except to remark that—plausibly enough—sculpture and architecture stand in this relation to painting, and drama to literature. Music, also, is generally supposed to have a sister art, namely the dance. They have grown up together; and after many centuries in which music rose to the highest artistic levels and ballet sank to mere entertainment or ballroom exercise, our so-called "modern dance" is again a serious creative venture, and is generally regarded as a musical art. Some aestheticians, and—even more significantly—some excellent dancers and choreographers, and a few musicians, maintain that exactly the same forms may be exhibited in tone as in bodily motion, so that the difference between music and dance is only a superficial one of appeal to hearing or to vision, as the case may be, like the difference between spoken and written language. The French music critic who calls himself Jean D'Udine says in his provocative little book, *L'art et le geste:* "All music is dance—all melody just a series of attitudes, poses." Jacques-Dalcroze, who was a musician and not a dancer by training, regarded dance as a direct translation of music into bodily responses, so that any music could be "danced," i.e. rendered precisely as a balletic pattern. Fokine undertakes to translate Beethoven's symphonies into choreographic terms. And Sakharov writes in his *Reflections on Music and the Dance:* "I do not dance *to* music, I dance music." The person who taught him to do this, he claims, was Isadora Duncan; she was the first serious artist who proposed to dance music itself, to interpret it, just as a virtuoso with his instrument interprets what the composer has written.

Isadora's relation to music, however, is just what throws a serious doubt on the musical character of dance. An artist is usually a competent judge of work in his entire realm, i.e. anywhere within the scope of the primary illusion of his art, even where

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that illusion appears in a special mode not his own. But dancers are not usually connoisseurs of music, and there are but few musicians who appreciate dancing at all. Isadora's musical taste was simply mystifying. From the musician's standpoint it was neither good nor bad, but unpredictable. She admired very good pieces and very bad ones; her favorite composers were Beethoven and Ethelbert Nevin. What she did with their works was always beautiful, but musical critics generally protested that she did not understand the music and flouted the composer's intent.

The explanation is, I think, that her judgment was not musical, but balletic; and that very great and very poor music, alike, may have balletic value. Isadora's feeling was so entirely for dance that she could find nothing else in music, and therefore believed that what she danced was the music itself, its very essence. This belief did not interfere with her art, but it did mislead and affront musical people, whose conceptions of Beethoven certainly were not reflected, let alone deepened, by her performance. Musicians generally resent the modern ballet just because they believe it to be a musical art, and then find that it adds nothing to music, but on the contrary distorts and abuses it.

The illusion created in dance—any kind of dance, from square dance or social dance to the Russian ballet—is neither that of music, i.e. virtual Time, nor the virtual Space of plastic art. Dance is a separate art, with its own primary illusion.

What, then, is dance? Those dancers who do not regard it as a representation of music generally define it as a spatial art, and conceive it either as a pattern of motions with moments of statuesque arrest, or else as a succession of poses, like *tableaux vivants,* connected by motions. This is the "classic" point of view, comparable to the conception of painting as arrangement of colors, and of music as the combination of consonant or dissonant tones. For in the dance, motion is actual, not illusory, and a pattern of motions taken simply as such is aesthetic rather than significant. There is another school, however, sometimes frowned upon as "impure" in its aim, that treats all balletic motion as pantomime, i.e. formalized imitation of acts. The histrionic content here is, of course, thematic, and if it monopolizes or even distracts the beholder's interest it debases the dance. Imitation, however important to a particular piece, is never an essential factor in an art. Yet the dramatic theory has its virtues,

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for it presents balletic motion as *gesture*. This immediately sets dance apart from mobile sculpture, from the rhythmic movements of machines, the sinuous grace of a hunting cat, or the weaving of gnats in the air. Gesture is in some ways a broader term than motion, and in other ways narrower: broader, because a pose, a look, a moment of rigor may be a gesture without being a motion; narrower, because not all motions are gestures. Gesture is expressive behavior. In actual life it is often unconscious, symptomatic of emotions and impulses; an attitude of weariness, for instance, is a sustained unconscious gesture. But gesture may be deliberate, too, and practical (pointing, beckoning, warning, etc.), or even symbolic, supplementing language (as when one says: "A fish as big as *that*"). The deaf-mute alphabet is a completely discursive system of gesture; another, less articulate but more self-evident, is the sign language evolved by Indian and white scouts, in which the principle of symbolization is pantomime, stretched to great lengths of metaphorical use.

Gesticulation, however, is not art; it is expression, subjective self-expression or objective logical expression as the case may be, but as long as it is essentially either emotive or practical it is not art. If gestures could convey nothing but literal ideas—"I throw a ball," "the swan dies," "this is the way we wash the clothes"—they would not lend themselves to artistic uses. But they are more than involuntary or semantic acts: they are *forms* of behavior. As forms they may be abstracted, and treated freely to create rhythms, indivisible lines of action, the appearance of challenge and response, the illusion of powers in conflict, in balance, or in union. And here we have the ruling principle—the primary illusion of balletic art: all dance creates a realm of virtual *Power,* an illusory field of forces involved only with each other, weaving a fabric of freely rhythmic, continuous and coherent gesture.

The forces presented in dance may be physical, psychical, mythic or magical, but they are always felt, not computed or inferred. They are not the actual forces that move the dancers, bodily energies limited by gravity and friction, but lures and excitements, prescribed paths, engulfing rhythms, personal wills—all orgiastic, mystical, or musical causes, virtual powers that evoke virtual activities. In watching a ballet one is not aware of people running around, but of the dance *driving* this way, *drawn* that

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way, *gathering* here, *spreading* there. In a pas-de-deux the two partners seem to magnetize each other. The relation between them is more than a spatial one; it is a relation of forces.

The most elementary means of abstracting motion from the work it actually performs is rhythm. This is a psychological factor, not an intrinsic property of mechanical motions, where there is uniformity, but no accent. We organize uniformities mentally into arsis and thesis, to and fro, tick and tock. Rhythmization transforms walking into marching, prancing into dancing; for it establishes a conceptual control over motion and gives it a clearly sensible form. As soon as we feel the rhythm of a march, it dominates our walking; we "fall into step." Ballroom dancing is one of the simplest abstractions of motion from the purpose of *loco*motion, which becomes subordinate. Through rhythm, and the gestive form of the step, the partners are oriented toward each other, and this virtual relation links them even without any physical contact. Artistically such performance has very limited possibilities, yet it creates its own little realm of virtual power, and is genuine dance.

In higher phases of balletic art, real activities are often simulated, and enter into the pattern of gestures as pantomime, or dance-motifs. But in so doing they are always transmuted into mere appearances: in representing flight from a pursuer, the dancers do not actually run as they would at an alarm of fire, but retreat in a rippling toe-dance or even pirouetting, or withdraw with a mere leaning gesture—anything, in fact, except turning around and running. If the dance is successful, they seem to be driven by a menacing force and to be carried by emotion.

If we regard dance as the envisagement of a realm of Powers, and the presentation of their interplay, we can readily understand why dance holds a supreme position in primitive culture, why it is universally linked with religion, and why it usually reaches its highest development before music is more than a rhythmic accompaniment to it, and before painting has risen above traditional designs on pottery and textiles or on the human body. Elaborate ritual dances are found where poetry does not yet seem to exist. The reason is that imaginary Powers—mana, taboo, magic, godhead, and doom—are the realities of primitive life, but not the prosaic realities: they constitute a closed and sancti-

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fied realm, the spirit-world.[1] The center of this world—the altar—is the natural focus of the dance, which symbolizes and celebrates such Powers. The altar is the virtual force that organizes the whole field, and around it or its equivalent—the idol, the priest, the totem—the dance develops. Pantomime usually supplies the motifs, as physical objects furnish motifs for painting and sculpture. The magic circle governed by the god is the ideal choric stage, and ritual a constant source of purely expressive actions, thematic elements that weave themselves naturally into dance.

The proposition that artistic symbols are non-discursive forms, presenting the morphology of sentience which discursive forms cannot express, meets its test case, of course, in the literary arts. Certainly literature is composed of discursive symbols; and just as certainly it contains more than a logically adequate statement of propositions. This is most evident in poetry. Many books have been written on the problem of poetic quality, and different thinkers have attributed it variously to word-music, to imagery, to suggested associations, and to value-judgments implied by the poet's selection of things to dwell upon. Dream symbolism especially has been held responsible for poetic appeal.

Word-music is a factor in poetic composition, but it is not what makes poetry. The same is true of imagery, word-pathos, "criticism of life," and "dynamic" phantasy. Sound and sense, implication and suggestion, derivations and metaphorical meanings, grammar, accent, dialect, strong and weak word-forms—all are materials out of which the elements of poetry may be made. But those *elements* are as non-discursive as the painter's perceptual objects, the musician's sonorous moving forms, the dancer's virtual forces. They are created, i.e. are illusions achieved by abstracting semblances from the actual world, and then composing these sheer appearances into new forms that mirror the logic of feeling.

The nature of literary creations is most readily illustrated in a simple experience with words that probably everyone has encountered: that a perfectly familiar fact seems perfectly terrible when stated in a certain way. I do not mean in a certain tone of voice, but with a particular turn of phrase. Surely everybody has at some time been told: "It sounds so awful when you put

[1]The dichotomy of primitive life into sacred and profane was noted and developed by Cassirer in *Die Philosophie der symbolischen Formen*, vol. 2. See also *Language and Myth* and *An Essay on Man*.

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it like that!" Or: "When you say it that way, it seems silly." Or: "He made it sound simply wonderful." One does not protest that the fact *is* so awful because of the presentation, but only that it seems, or "sounds," that way. But one might say quite truly: "When you put it like that, it's an awful thought!" The thought is awful, although the proposition remains just what it was. And here, I believe, is the principle of all literature, which is most evident in lyric poetry. Poetry asserts propositions only *as thoughts.* The same proposition may be thought in countless ways, and each way has its own emotional value. The proposition, which might be expressed in logical symbols, is related to the thought as a physical object is related to a visual form that portrays it. The thought is what the poet's way of stating the proposition creates; the thought is a poetic element.

Our actual thoughts chase each other in haphazard fashion, so that their complete form rarely develops. We think and act without taking stock of the way events and phantasies, beliefs and proposals and expectations really present themselves; yet such experiences constitute our personal history. Like all actuality, that history is only half perceived, and half intellectually constructed. For practical purposes we do not need to remember an unbroken past, but only to reconstruct salient moments, that mark successive stations in the progression of events known as our "life."

Literary art, by contrast, creates a completely "lived" piece of experience. The piece may be very small, like the brief thought that constitutes a lyric such as:

> *A slight disorder in the dress*
> *Giveth to youth a wantonness——*

But it is a thought really seen in its passage, followed through from its whimsical rise to the final pronouncement of taste that closes it. The idea is fully entertained, without being foiled by the incursion of other, perhaps more important thoughts; and it seems to be entertained actively, at the moment, though it was written more than 300 years ago. The reason is that it is the semblance of a thought; that is why we read it as something essentially *timeless.* The present tense, which is characteristic of lyric poetry, is really a "historical present," for it makes no reference to the actual situation of the poet, but to an envisaged piece of life. In that context, events and acts seemingly take

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place as they do in actuality—but only seemingly; the experience of them is virtual, and the form of the illusory occurrences is as much simplified, organized, and composed as a picture. But such illusory events are not discursive propositions. The propositional material has been transformed into experiential elements in a created semblance of life.

This total semblance is, I think, what critics often refer to as the poet's "vision." I can find no other justification for that word. In the framework of the present theory, however, it is perfectly justified. A poem is essentially and entirely a creation; the words beget virtual elements, that exhibit forms of sensibility and emotion and thus carry a meaning beyond the discursive statements involved in their construction. But the meaning is not something to be read "between the lines"; it is *in* the lines, in every word and every punctuation mark as well as in the literal content of every sentence. The whole fabric is a work of art.

The first task that confronts an artist is always to establish the primary illusion, i.e. to close the total form and set it apart from actuality. That is the purpose of poetic structure—of meter, rhyme, divisions, repeated or imitated lines, and pure sound-effects like hey-nonny-no and daffy-down-dilly. How much of this artifice is needed depends on what other elements there are that will assure the "psychical distance" of the work. A heavy discursive content usually requires a strict poetic form, as for instance the sonnet; there is such a thing as a true sonnet idea, which calls for every device of fabrication, from word-music to interlacing rhymes, to keep the thought in the realm of imagination. If, on the other hand, great imagery and a certain unrealism of subject matter already perform this function, the poetic structure may be very free, as in the Psalms of David. In poetry as elsewhere, the means of creating virtual elements are various, and almost every one—sound, allusion, imagery, archaism, dynamic symbolism, ambiguity, etc.—has its possible alternatives.

The most prevalent single device, probably the first to beget literature at all, is narrative. The image of experience is most readily obtained as we obtain it in actual life, namely as memory. Marcel Proust finds this to be, indeed, his only key to authentic composition, for memory leaves much out, but intensifies what

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it retains, and usually completes its reconstructions of life by the principle of association rather than real causal connectedness. The process of intensification seems to him the essence of all poetic experience, and certainly there is much to be said for his analysis. Memory is formative, and produces perspectives of deeply felt events. In literature the unfolding of a story does the same thing. Even a simple narrative is such an organizing force that we usually speak of it as the "plot," i.e. the ground plan, of the work in which it is utilized. Where the principle of narration enters into poetic structure all other devices have to adjust themselves: the choice of imagery is no longer free, as in the pure lyric, but is determined by the need of heightening some events and perhaps preparing others, and of slowing or hurrying the course of action. The descriptions of witch-fires and water snakes and "slimy things" in the *Ancient Mariner* make the story move with terrifying slowness while the ship is in doldrums. The same effect may ruin a work, where the story ought to move and is delayed by long descriptions introduced for their own sake, as in many romantic poems and novels. The verbal problem, on the other hand, becomes much simpler where narration holds the total structure together; the intensive poetic cadence that is the magic of the lyric is no longer needed, so a much simpler form, e.g. the colloquial language and regular meter of the ballad, may take its place. The prime virtue of story is that it constructs a much bigger span of experience than a presentation of entirely subjective events can effect. It creates in free and full scope the primary illusion of literature, which is a *virtual Past.*

As the lyric and the ode use the present tense to convey thoughts that are really timeless, so the ballad is normally in the past tense, because it achieves the illusion of history. The perfect tense is, in fact, characteristic of literature as a whole; the use of the present is a special device, for the semblance of experience made with words is always complete, like memory. But it is a powerful device, the historical present, and does not by any means always achieve "timelessness"; it may intensify a past event, as strong feeling intensifies memories to the point of making them almost eidetic, so people sometimes say: "It's just as though it were now!"

The ballad is built on one straightforward story, and has therefore a fundamentally linear structure, reflected in its simple and

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fast-moving meter. There are broader planes that give one a sense of contemporaneousness of events, and consequently of history as a fabric rather than a sequence of actions. Such a design is the romance, which uses a new technique, namely a detailed account of *how* things are done instead of the mere statement of their occurrence. Here description serves for something more than to delight the imagination by dwelling on events; this being dwelled on gives the events new form—like the creation of visual forms suddenly in three dimensions instead of two. That, far more than the introduction of occasional contemporaneous happenings, gives the romance the appearance of a fabric instead of a thread of history. The descriptive principle, in fact, is so effectual that the persons in the story may be quite schematically rendered, human types rather than individuals, actors in a very colorful scene, like figures in a tapestry.

As the resources of narrative are developed, the office of pure diction, i.e. poetic statement, becomes less vital; the romance retains its literary virtue even in prose, as in the Spanish "novella." Finally the full-fledged novel, the chief fictional work of our age, presents an entirely different appearance, for its most important creations are "characters," individual human agents. These are so obviously its pivotal elements that popular judgment, and often even the professional critics, treat only the personalities in a novel as the author's creations, and literary criticism is led into a new danger, namely that of regarding the novelist as essentially a psychologist, a reporter on typical human reactions. Any novel that presents a lifelike personality is likely to be hailed as great literature. The peripheral characters, the places, the impersonal events, all these are passed over. But in fact they are all cut out of the same cloth as the central personages. Not only the brothers Karamazov, but the dim figures of the Elder, the lame little girl, the inn-keeper and the officers of the law are literary creations; if they are undeveloped it is not because Dostoevsky did not know their prototypes intimately enough to give them more articulate form, but because he really created, not copied, them—created their outlines as he needed them, without detail but with perfect truth. Furthermore, the inn, the garden, the days and nights are all creations—elements in a virtual Past which bears the stamp of vivid memory, yet is not anyone's actual recollection.

The analysis of forms I have just presented leads from the sim-

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plest—the use of words to abstract the appearance and feeling of propositions as they figure in our thinking—to the very elaborate composition of virtual events filling a whole human consciousness, even an extended, imaginary "social consciousness." Historically, however, *the very complex was first;* for all literary devices—rhythmic cadence, story, imagery, realism and supernaturalism and mythical symbolism, dramatic characters, lyric utterance, dialogue—all may be found in the epic, which is the cradle of literature.

All—yes; *but not all at once.* The epic is the matrix, for in its great structure there is a constant variety of forms due to the alternating use of techniques each of which produces its own perspective. The purer literary genders have been derived, I believe, by specialization, through the discovery that any principle may become central, and may, in fact, stand proxy for any other, given the circumstances. It is this possibility of alternating the techniques of creation that keeps the several forms (lyric, ballad, novel, biography, etc.) so closely related; but it also begets their multiplicity, which is presumably not exhausted yet.

Nothing has been said, so far, about that ancient and eminent art form, the drama; and in the compass of this essay little can be said, save that I believe *the drama is not strictly literature at all.* It has a different origin, and uses words only as *utterances.* It is a kindred art, for it produces the same primary illusion as literature, namely the semblance of experienced events, but in a different mode: instead of creating a virtual Past it creates a virtual Present. It is related to literature as sculpture and architecture are related to the graphic arts. But this categorical statement must remain an "aside"; our subject is already too great for the allotted pages.

In the scaffolding of this theory of art, which was derived by generalization from the more limited study of significant forms in music, the first result is a very radical setting apart of the major arts. Yet oddly enough, as soon as they are duly distinguished, their basic identity comes to light, because their respective principles, whereby each is an autonomous realm, are analogous, so their abstract formulations coincide, and make one set of propositions expressing the broad and universal principles of Art. But, to borrow Rudyard Kipling's phrase, "That is another story."

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Three Poems

ANTHONY HECHT

DIVINATION BY A CAT

Fence-walker, balancer, your devil-may-care
Astounds the workman teetering on his girder
Whom gravity and the pavement want to murder,
But with eight lives to spare,
Who would lack courage? From his jungle-gym
He lowers, thin as a hair, the strand of fear
To plumb the seventy storeys under him,
And for his firm intent
The spirit level of the inner ear
Is his chief instrument.

But you are classic, striking the S-curve
In a half-gainer from some eminence,
And with Athenian equipoise and sense
To qualify your nerve,
End up unerringly upon your feet.
O this is Greek to all of us. I dare
Construe your figure for our human fate,
And like the Pythoness
Decoding viscera, anoint the air
With emblematic guess.

You are the lesser Tiger, yet the night
Blazes with the combustion of your eye,
And we, in our imperfect symmetry,
Combining double sight,
Can see mirrored in your chatoyant gaze
Our fire, slight, diminished. If the first
Intensity return of that white blaze
To run our body through,
Might it not burn us? If the fire burst,
Will it not barbecue?

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Cat, you are meat for study. All our youth
Shall vanish, like your literary kin;
Dwindle into a disembodied grin;
    And if we want the truth,
Why, we must cram for it, gather your drift,
Like that odd family trudging from St. Ives.
Be Plutarch to our ignorance; your gift
    Compares Athens to Rome,
And the collected tails of all your lives
    Shall drive the moral home.

ANNIVERSARY

Before a grotto of blue-tinted rock
Master Bellini has set down St. Francis.
A light split through the Apennines to lock,
Counter and splice man's painful doubleness,
Else he could weakly couple at the belt
His kite-mind to his cloven nether parts
That seek to dance their independent dances;
The sudden light descending came to bless
His hands and feet with blisters, and to melt
With loving that most malleable of hearts.

Birds in the trees his chronicle recite:
Now that God made of him a living net
To catch all graces, yet to let through light.
Fisher of birds and lepers, lost in thought,
Darkly emblazoned, where the oblivious mule
Champs at the grasses and the sunset rusts
The hill-top fortress, where the painter set
Heron and rabbit, it was here he caught
Holiness that came swimming like a school
Of silver fishes to out-flash his lusts.

Now I have seen those mountains, and have seen
The faun go frozen on the road with fear

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Of the careening autobus, the sheen
Of its dilated eyes flash in its head
Like glass reflectors, and have seen the trees
As green as ever where their branches thresh
The warm Italian winds of one more year
Since that great instant. The painter's dead
Who brought the Doge and nobles to their knees
Before the joiner, Francis in the flesh.

THE STARRY DIAGRAM

When Huckleberry Finn stretched on his back,
Rafting to south along the broad Missouri,
In colloquy convened with Nigger Jim,
They made high inquisition of that fury
Which is contained within its own design.
It was a firmament of violet black,
Speckled and flecked with light that rendered dim
Such darkness as the asteroids define.

Huck had a postulate for that fine June:
The stars came out of nowhere; they occurred.
Mulling the simple waters with their feet
They syllogized, but it was Jim conferred
Subtlety to this least of dialogues:
The stars were laid by the great Mother Moon.
And Huck agreed, who thought an equal feat
How multitudinous were the roe of frogs.

Now being both of them persons of tact
They made no mention of the Husband Sun
Who had forsaken late his frosty wife
And by ethereal license had begun
Heated attentions toward our lady earth,
And by the warmth of his intemperate act
Had caused to swell with rich and sudden life
The lineaments of her tremendous girth.

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*The Analects**

Translated by EZRA POUND

BOOK ELEVEN

Hsien Tsin
The Earlier Approach

I

1. He said: Earlier approach to the rites and to music was the countryman's, the latter the gentleman's; I come at 'em the earlier way.

II

1. He said: None of those who followed me to Ch'an and Ts'ai now come to my door.
2. Showing *virtu* in act: Yen Yuan, Min Tze-ch'ien, Zan Po-niu, Chung-King; valued for their conversation: Tsai Wo, Tze-Kung; for administrative services: Zan Yu, Chi Lu; for their literary studies: Tze-yu, Tze-hsia.

III

1. He said: Hui's no help, he's pleased with everything I say.

IV

1. He said: Min Tze-ch'ien most certainly filial, no one disagrees with what his father, mother and all his brothers say (differs from what they say of him).

V

1. Nan Yung thrice came back to (quoting) "The White Sceptre"; Kung-tze gave him his elder brother's daughter to wife.

VI

1. Chi K'ang asked which of the disciples loved study. Kung-tze answered: There was Yen Hui who loved study, unfortunately he died young, and the model's lost.

VII

1. Yen Yuan died and (his father) Yen Lu wanted Confucius to sell his carriage to pay for the coffin.

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*Part I appeared in THE HUDSON REVIEW, Spring 1950. Book XI begins Part II.

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2. Confucius said: Talents or no talents every man calls his son, son. Li died and had a coffin but no outer shell. I did not go on foot to get him an outer shell; having ranked just below the Great Officers, it was not fitting to go on foot.

VIII

1. Yen Yuan died, Confucius said: Heaven destroys me, destroys me.

IX

1. Yen Yuan died, and He mourned greatly; disciples said: This is excessive.
2. He said: Excessive?
3. If I do not greatly lament him, whom should I?

X

1. Yen Yuan died, the disciples wanted a big funeral. Confucius said: You may not.
2. The disciples gave a great funeral.
3. Confucius said: Hui treated me as a father. I have not managed to treat him as a son, not my fault but yours.

XI

1. Chi Lu asked about the service for ghosts and spirits. Confucius said: You cannot be useful to the living, how can you be useful to (serve) ghosts?

"Venture to ask about death."

Said: Not understanding life, how can you understand death? [*Or "the living, how understand the dead?"*]

XII

1. Min-tze was waiting on him looking respectful, Tze-Lu looking active, Zan Yu and Tze-Kung, frank and easy. He was pleased.
2. (Said): The Sprout, there, (Yu) won't die a natural death.

XIII

1. Lu folk in the matter of the new long Treasury building:
2. Min Tze-ch'ien said: What about repairing the old one? Why change and build?
3. He said: Great man for not talking, when he does it's mid target. [*Chung*, the middle, what it's all about.]

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XIV

1. He said: What's Yu's lute doing at my door?

[Commentator's guess that "Sprout's" music was too warlike. Might distinguish "campaign" lute from scholar's lute? Must-lute and Now-lute.]

2. The disciples did not revere Tzu-lu (Yu). He said: The Sprout has come up the hall, but not entered the inner apartment.

XV

1. Tze-Kung asked: Who's the better man, Shih or Shang? He said: Shih goes past the mark, Shang don't get there.

(Tze-King) said: "So Shih's the better?"

He said: It's as bad to overdo as not to get there.

XVI

1. The Chi chief was richer than the Duke of Chau, yet Ch'iu went on raking in taxes and piling up wealth for him.

2. Confucius said: No disciple of mine. The kids can beat drums and go after him (for all I care).

"Taxes" is from Legge, Mathews follows it, but with no other illustration to back it up. (Lien [M. 3999] *is not among the different sorts of legalized tax mentioned by Mencius* III.1, iii. 6. Han[4] (2052) *must be a misprint in some editions.) Could be:* went on raking it in, piling it up, supplementing his profits, his increase.

XVII

1. Ch'ai is simple.
2. Shan is coarse.
3. Shih, deflected.
4. Yu ("the Sprout") is unkempt.

All these adjectives unsatisfactory. Probably defined by the quality of the men described when *they were used. It is assumed (by L. etc.) that they are pejorative. I cannot feel that the assumption is proved.*

XVIII

1. He said: Hui's not far from it, frequently hard up. [K'ung *can mean also:* blank.]

2. Ts'ze does not receive (accept) destiny (? take orders) [L.: accept the decrees of Heaven], his riches fatten, his calculations are often correct.

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XIX

1. Tze-Chang asked: How does a "shan[4]" man [*dictionary:* good man] act? He said: He does not trample footsteps [*note 502.7 combine, as "feelings"*], he does not enter the (inner) apartment.

This verse can only be taken as a definition of the word shan,[4] *which pictogrammically suggests symmetry, over a mouth. Goodness of the solar Ram, or what will you? L. takes it "inner chamber of the sage."*

XX

1. He said: Firm orderly discourse, we accept a fellow, but is he the real thing, or is it just gravity?*

XXI

1. Tze-Lu asked if he should act [L. immediately] on what he heard.

He said: Your father and elder brother are alive, why should you act on what you hear?

Zan Yu asked if he should act on what he heard. He said: When you hear it, do it.

Kung-hsi Hwa said: (Tze-Lu) Yu asked if he should act when he heard a thing, and you said: Your father and brother are alive. Ch'iu asked if he should act on what he heard, you said: Go to it. I am perplexed and venture. . . . Confucius said: Ch'iu is slow, therefore I prodded him; "the Sprout" too active, so I tried to slow him down.

XXII

1. He was in dread in Kwang, Yen Yuan came after him. He said: I thought you were dead.

(Yen) said: You are alive, how should I venture to die?

XXIII

1. Chi Tze-zan asked whether Chung Yu and Zan Ch'iu could be called great ministers.

2. He said: I thought you would ask about someone out of the ordinary, and you ask about Yu and Ch'iu.

3. You call a man a great minister when he serves his prince honestly, and retires when he cannot.

4. You can call Yu and Ch'iu "ministers" and that's all.

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*Sterne: a mysterious carriage of the body, to conceal the defects of the mind. *Chuang*[1], sedateness, dressed-up-ness.

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[*Or perhaps better "tool-ministers,"* 1556.b.] *Pauthier with neat irony* "considerés comme ayant augmenté le nombre des ministres."

5. (Tze-zan) said: Aye, they'll always follow along.

6. He said: They would not follow along to parricide or regicide.

XXIV

1. Tze-Lu got Tze-Kao made governor of Pi.

2. He said: You are injuring somebody's son.

3. Tze-Lu said: There are men of the people, there are land altars and altars of the grain spirits, why do we need to read books and go on with study?

4. He said: That's why I hate big smart talk [fluency, L. glib-tongued people].

XXV

1. Tze-Lu, Tsang Hsi, Zan Yu, and Kung-hsi Hwa were sitting with him.

2. He said: I am a day older than you, but pay no attention to that.

3. You sit round saying: We are unknown, if somebody should recognize you, what would you do [L. like to do]?

4. Tze-Lu replied straight off the bat: "Thousand chariots' state. Shut in between large states, and armies of invasion, grain and provision famine, I could give the people courage if I had three years' run, and teach 'em the rules, put 'em on the square." The big man smiled (or grinned).

5. "Ch'iu, how about you?"

Replied: "Give me the job of a sixty, seventy or fifty li square district. I could give 'em abundant crops in three years. It would need a superior man to teach 'em the rites and music." ["*Abundant crops*"—*probably more literal:* there would be enough (for the) people.]

6. "What about you, Ch'ih?"

Replied: I don't say I could do that sort of thing, should like to study, serve in the ancestral temple, at audience of the princes, ceremonial chapter style [L. & M. dark square-made robe, black linen cap] to be lesser assistant.

7. "Chieh (clever-boy), what about you?" Struck his *se* (25-string lute) with curious jingling, laid down the lute and

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got up, answering: Differ from the three of 'em in what they grasp at.

Confucius said: What harm, let each say what he wants *(directio voluntatis)*.

(Chieh) said: Toward the end of spring, in nice spring clothes, with five or six fellows who have been capped, and six or seven kids, go bathe in I river (Shantung) with the wind over the rain dance [*probably,* wind for the rain dance, *could be:* wind suitable for the rain dance] to chant (through the service) and go home.

The big man heaved a sigh of assent: I am with Chieh.

[*L. calls this young man Tien.*]

8. The three went out, Tsang Hsi delaying, and said: What about these three men's words? Confucius said: Each one expressed his preference, that's all.

9. (Hsi) said: Boss, why did you grin at "The Sprout"?

10. He said: A state is managed with ceremony, his words were not polite, so I grinned.

11. "But Ch'iu didn't ask for a state."

"Calmly, did you ever see a district fifty, sixty or seventy li square that wasn't a state?"

12. "Only Ch'ih, was he asking for a state?"

"Together in ancestral temple, who save nobles would be there; if Ch'ih were a lesser acolyte, who'd be the big ones?"

BOOK TWELVE

I

1. Yen Yuan asked about full manhood. He said: Support oneself and return to the rites, that makes a man.

> [*The "support oneself" is fairly literal. It cannot be limited to superficial idea of making a living, but certainly need not be taken ascetically. "Determine the character" might render one side of the phrase.*]

If a man can be adequate to himself for one day and return to the rites, the empire would come home to its manhood. This business of manhood sprouts from oneself, how can it sprout from others?

2. Yen Yuan said: Wish I had the eye to see it, may I ask?

If something is contrary to the rites, don't look at it; don't

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listen to it, don't discuss it, if it is contrary to the rites don't spend energy on it. Yen Yuan said: I am not clever but I would like to act on that advice.

II

1. Chung-kung asked about full manhood. He said: Out of doors look on men as if you were receiving great guests; put men to work as if you were performing the Great Sacrifice, what you don't want (done to you) don't do to another, settle in a district without fault-finding, take root in the home without fault-finding.

Chung-kung said: I'm not clever, but I'd like to put those words into practice.

III

1. Sze-ma Niu asked about manhood. He said: The full man's words have an edge of definition. [*L. merely:* slow of speech.]

2. (Niu) said: [*as L.*] Cautious and slow of speech, is that a definition of manhood? He said: Difficult business to reach one's verbal manifest in one's actions unless the words are defined [L.: unless the speech be slow].

[*The right hand component of this* jen[4] *is clearly shaped as* jen (4) 3110; *not as in M.'s* 3117, *but not in all printed editions.*]

IV

1. Sze-ma Niu asked about (the term) gentleman. He said: The man of breed has neither melancholy nor fears.

2. (Niu) said: Being without retrospective melancholy or fear, is that being the gentleman? [*Or:* How does that constitute the *chun tzu?*]

3. He said: On introspection nothing wrong (diseased), how would he have regrets or fears?

V

1. Sze-ma Niu said in worry (or regret): Everyone has brothers except me. I haven't (or have lost 'em).

2. Tze-Hsia said: "I've heard said:

3. "Death and life have their sealed orders, riches and honours are from heaven."

4. The man with the voices of his forebears within him is reverent; he gives men respect, and holds to the right usage, all men within the four seas are elder and younger brothers. How can the proper man be distressed for lack of brothers?

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VI

1. Tze-chang asked about light. He said: He whom slow soaking slander, and

tiger-stomach receive inform

[*L. "statements that startle"*]

have no effect on (are no go with) can be called enlightened [*bis* can be called perspicuous, far-seeing].

VII

1. Tze-Kung asked about government. He said: Enough food, enough weapons, and that the people stand by their word [L. have confidence in their ruler].

2. Tze-Kung said: If you can't manage this, which do you omit first? He said: The armaments.

3. Tze-Kung: If you can't manage the other two, which do you omit first? He said: The food. All must die, but if the people be without faith (fail of their word) nothing stands.

VIII

1. Chi Tze-ch'ang said: A proper man needs the solid qualities, that's enough, what's the use of higher culture?

2. Tze-kung said: Pity the great philosopher's words, he is a superior man (but) four horses cannot overtake the tongue.

3. The finish is as the substance, the solid, the substance like the polish it takes; tiger-skin, leopard-skin are like dog-skin and goat-skin if you take the hair off.

IX

1. The Duke Ai said to Yu Zo: Bad year, scant harvest, what's to be done?

2. Yu Zo: Why not tithe?

3. "Two tenths not enough, how would I manage with one?"

4. Answered: If the hundred clans have enough, who won't give enough to the prince, if the hundred clans are in want who will give enough to the prince?

The great discussion of the tenth tithe vs/fixed charge, is given in Mencius III.1. iii, 6.

X

1. Tze-chang asked about raising the level of conscience and detecting illusions (delusions). He said: The first thing is: get

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to the centre (what it is all "about"), stand by your word, respect the meum and tuum, that will elevate your virtue (level of conscious acts).

2. Love a man, you wish he may live; hate and you wish him to die; then you wish him to live, and turn round and want him to die, that is a muddle.

3. "Really it is not on account of the wealth, and yet you note a difference." [*This refers to Odes* II, IV, 4, 3, *the brother of the first wife, taking leave of brother-in-law remarried to a rich woman.*]

XI

1. Duke Ching of Ch'i asked Kung-tze about government.

2. Kung-tze replied: Prince to be prince; minister, minister; father, father; son, son.

3. The Duke said: Good. I stand by that, if the prince be not prince; minister not minister; father not father; son not son, although there is grain can I manage to eat it all?

L. "Although I have my revenue, can I enjoy it?" Possibly: "although there is grain will I have time to eat it?" M. gives no example of chu (1) *interrogative.*

XII

1. He said: Settle disputes with half a word, "the Sprout" could do that.

2. Tze-lu (the Sprout) never slept on a promise.

XIII

1. He said: In hearing litigations I am like another, the thing is to have no litigation, *n'est-ce pas?*

XIV

1. Tze-chang asked about government. He said: Not to lie down on it; to act from the middle of the heart.

XV

1. He said: Extensive study for accomplishments; restraint by the rites; by short-cuts across fields you lose the great road.

XVI

1. He said: The proper man brings men's excellence to focus, he does not focus their evil qualities; the mean man does the reverse.

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XVII

1. Chi K'ang asked Confucius about government. Kung-tze replied: Government consists in correcting; if you lead by being correct, who will dare be incorrect?

XVII

1. Chi K'ang worried about thieves, questioned Confucius. Kung-tze answered: If you weren't covetous, they wouldn't steal even if you paid 'em.

XIX

1. Chi K'ang asked Confucius about government: "What about killing the wayward for the benefit of the well behaved?"

Kung-tze answered: Why kill to govern? If you want the good, the people will be good; the proper man acting according to his conscience is wind, the lesser folk acting on conscience, grass; grass with wind above it must bend.

XX

1. Tze-chang asked what an officer should be like to go far.
2. He said: What do you call going far?
3. Tze-chang said: To be heard of throughout the state, to be heard of in his clan.
4. He said: That's notoriety not distinction (or perspicacity, making a wide noise not getting very far).
5. The far-effective man is solid, upright, loves justice; examines peoples' words, looks into their faces, thinks how, in what way, he is inferior to them, roots in the state and goes far; roots in his family and effects things at a distance.
6. The notorious bloke puts up a show of manhood, and acts counter to it, perfectly confident; is heard about to the end of the state, makes a noise throughout all his clan.

XXI

1. Fan Ch'ih walking with him below the rain altars (or to celebration of the rain sacrifice pantomime) said: Venture to ask how to lift one's conscience in action; to correct the hidden tare, and separate one's errors?
2. He said: An excellent question!
3. Put first the action, second the success. Won't that raise the level of your conscious acts? Work on one's own faults, not on someone else's hatefulnesses, won't that comb out the hidden weeds?

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For one morning's temper to jeopard one's life and even that of one's relatives, isn't that hallucination?

XXII

1. Fan Ch'ih asked about humaneness. He said: Love men. Asked about knowledge. He said: To know men.

2. Fan Ch'ih didn't get as far (see through to the end of that answer).

3. He said: Promote the straight, and grind the crooked, that way you can straighten 'em.

4. Fan Ch'ih retired, and seeing Tze-Hsia said: Just saw the big man and asked him about knowledge. He said: Promote the straight and grind the crooked, that way you can straighten the crooks, how did he mean it?

5. Tze-Hsia said: That's a rich and ample saying.

6. Shun had the Empire, picked out Kao-Yao from the multitude, promoted him, and wrong 'uns departed. T'ang had the Empire, he picked out I Yin from all the hordes, promoted him, and the wrong 'uns departed.

XXIII

1. Tze-Kung asked about friendship. He said: Speak out from the centre of your mind, maintain the true process, if he can't hitch to it, don't disgrace yourself.

XXIV

1. Tsang-tze said: The proper man makes friends on the basis of culture, and by his friends develops his manhood (or develops his manhood through this fluid exchange).

BOOK THIRTEEN

Tze-Lu, the Sprout

I

1. Tze-Lu asked about government. He said: Go ahead, and work at it.

2. Asked further. Said: Don't lie down on it.

II

1. Chung-kung being minister of the Chi Head asked about government. He said: First get your assistants, overlook small faults and promote men of solid talent.

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2. Said: How shall I know men of solid talent?

Said: Promote those you do know, will everybody then neglect those whom you don't?

III

1. Tze-Lu said: The Lord of Wei is waiting for you to form a government, what are you going to do first?

2. He said: Settle the names (determine a precise terminology).

3. Tze-lu said: How's this, you're divagating, why fix 'em?

4. He said: You bumpkin! Sprout! When a proper man don't know a thing, he shows some reserve.

5. If words (terminology) are not (is not) precise, they cannot be followed out, or completed in action according to specifications.

6. When the services (actions) are not brought to true focus, the ceremonies and music will not prosper; where rites and music do not flourish punishments will be misapplied, not make bullseye, and the people won't know how to move hand or foot (what to lay hand on, or stand on).

7. Therefore the proper man must have terms that can be spoken, and when uttered be carried into effect; the proper man's words must cohere to things, correspond to them (exactly) and no more fuss about it.

IV

1. Fan Ch'ih asked to be taught agriculture. He said: I am not as good as an old peasant. Asked to study gardening. He said: I am not as good as an old gardener.

2. Fan Ch'ih went out. He said: What a nit-wit, that Fan.

3. If the men above love the rites no one of the people will dare be irreverent. If the men above love justice, none of the people will fail to conform, if the men above love veracity, none of the people will want to use mendacity, when the Great one is like this, the people of the Four Squares will come to him with their children on their backs, what does he need to know about farming?

V

1. Reciting the three hundred odes, given a government mission and not understanding it, sent to the Four Coigns and not being able to give the answers, even with a lot of talk won't be

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able to carry it through. [L.: notwithstanding extent of his learning, what practical use is it?]

VI

1. He said: When a prince's character is properly formed, he governs without giving orders (without orders, things go on). If his character is twisty he can give orders, but they won't be carried out.

VII

1. He said: The governments (forms of government) of Lu and Wei: elder and younger brothers.

VIII

1. He described Ching, a younger member of the Ducal family in Wei, by saying: He knew how to live (run a house). When he began to own something he said: what a lot. When he had a bit more, he said: this is enough. When rich, he said: how magnificent.

IX

1. When he went to Wei, Zan Yu drove.
2. He said: What's the population?
3. Zan Yu said: Well populated, what next? Said: Enrich them.
4. Said: They are rich, what next? Said: Educate.

X

1. He said: If anybody had used me for twelve months I'd have been able to do something, and in three years to have done something perfect.

XI

1. He said: Honest men govern a country a hundred years, they could vanquish the malevolent and get rid of the death penalty. I mean these precise words.

[*Possibly the first time anyone had thought of this.*]

XII

1. He said: With a real king, it would need a generation to produce the consequent humanization.

XIII

1. He said: If a man correct himself what difficulty will he have in consequent government, if he cannot correct himself,

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what's he doing in (or with) government, anyhow? [P. *comment pourrait-il rectifier la conduite des autres?*]

XIV

1. To Zan-tze, coming from court, he said: Why so late? Answered: There was official business. He said: May have been business *affaires du prince*, but if it were government business, even though I'm not in office, been very hard for me not to hear of it.

XV

1. Duke Ting asked if there were one sentence that could bring prosperity to a state. Kung-tze answered: One sentence could hardly put all that in motion.

[*cf*/Great Learning, Mature Study IX.3, *semina motuum.*]

2. There is a saying: it is difficult to be a prince, not easy to be a minister.

3. Knowing it is difficult to be prince, this one sentence might nearly bring prosperity to a state.

4. Said: Is there one sentence that can ruin a state? Kung-tze answered: Hardly, but there's a saying: no pleasure in being prince save that no one can go counter to what I say.

5. If good and unopposed that's all right? But if evil and no one oppose, that's almost enough to ruin a state? *N'est-ce pas?*

XVI

1. The Duke of Sheh asked about government.

2. He said: Those near, happy; those afar, attracted and come.

XVII

1. Tze-Hsia, being governor of Chu-fu, asked about government. He said: Not want things rushed, and not on the lookout for small profits; if you want things rushed they won't go through to the end;* looking for small profits, the big jobs won't be done right.

XVIII

1. The Duke of Sheh said to Kung-tze: There are honest characters in my village, if a man steals a sheep his son will bear witness to it.

2. Kung-tze said: There are honest men in my village with this difference; a father will conceal his son's doing, and a son his father's. There's honesty (straight seeing) in that, too.

*P. *Alors vous ne les comprendrez bien.*

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XIX

1. Fan Ch'ih asked about full manhood. He said: When living in comfort to be modest, when taking hold of affairs to observe honest procedure.

If one is to distinguish the kung[1] *from the* ching[4] *I think we must take it as between stasis and kinesis, the* ching *containing the radical for beat, and going back, I take it, to beating on the earth to propitiate the grain spirits (grass on top left, and various meanings of the* chü (1541, a, b)*—both terms given in dictionary as reverent).*

With sincerity in what you give men, even among the wild tribes (bowmen, and with dogs at camp-fire) east and north, these qualities cannot be shed (cannot be wasted, *leaf fallen, from tree rad/*).

XX

1. Tze-kung asked for the definition of an officer. He said: He has a sense of shame, if you send him to the last corner of the realm, he will carry out the prince's decrees and not disgrace himself.

2. Said: What's the next thing to that? [*Or as L.:* What category next?] Said: His own temple group weigh him and find him filial, folk in his own village knowing his weight find him brotherly.

3. Said: May I ask what next? Said: When he speaks he must stick to his word; acts must be consequent, water-on-stone, water-on-stone (persistent) little men, mebbe they constitute the next lot.

4. Said: What about the lot now in government? He said: Pint-pots and bamboo baskets (or buckets, utensils), count 'em as that, it'll do. [*E poi basta.*] *(Aliter:* they can use an abacus, calculate their own advantage, *or simply "all told".)*

XXI

1. He said: Not being able give to (be with) men who act on "what it is all about," I must (teach) the pushing and the cautious; the forward will go ahead and take hold; the cautious will stick to not doing what's not to be done. [P. *s'abstiennent au moins de pratiquer ce qui dépasse leur raison.*]

XXII

1. He said: The people of the South have a saying: an unconstant (inconsistent, inconsequent) man can't rise to be a wizard

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or doctor (better: can neither invoke nor cure), that's a good one.

2. Inconsistent (incoherent) in carrying his inwit into act, likely to meet disgrace.

3. He said: Not observing the signs, and that's all.

[*? a simple inattention enough to bring his downfall or:* he does not observe the signs, and that's all there is to be said about it; *for the doctor it would be symptoms, fails to diagnose, thus defining the word* heng[2], *consequent;* pu heng, *not consequent. One must insist on the nature of many verses as being set down in order to define particular words, as did Lorenzo Valla in his Elegantiae. Also Kung's laconism, highly pleasing to some readers.*]

XXIII

1. He said: The proper man is pleasant spoken but not just like everyone else. The small man is identical but not agreeable.

XXIV

1. Tze-kung said: What about a fellow that everyone in the village likes? He said: Won't do.

"What about a fellow everyone in his village hates?" He said: Won't do. Not up to the man whom the decent people in the village like and the wrong 'uns hate.

XXV

1. He said: The superior man is easy to serve and hard to please. Try to please him with something crooked and he won't be pleased. He employs men in accordance with their capacity. The mean man is easy to please and hard to work for. You can please him by doing wrong. He wants to get everything out of the same man.

XXVI

1. He said: The proper man is liberal and not high-horsey [*The* t'ai[4]. 6023 *liberal, hand grip over water rad/can also mean exalted, with the cross-light, lofty, high-minded and not proud*] (honoured and not proud). The mean man is proud and not high-minded (honoured, honourable).

XXVII

1. He said: The firm-edge, the persistent, the tree-like, those who hold in their speech, come near to full manhood.

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No, *reticent. And to combat anyone who thinks Karlgren a mere academic, cf/his note on "the impure light of fire that shines outward, the pure light of water that shines inward."*

XXVIII

1. Tze-lu said: What's the real definition of a scholar. He said: Urgent, quiet; [*M. gives the three terms:* earnest, pressing, pleased] standing by or looking at his own thought, his own mind-field or heart-field, easy to get on with (i^2) cheerful. [*I shd/ be inclined to add "spontaneous" to possible meanings of this* i^2.] He can be called a scholar (-officer), earnest with his friends, and stimulating; cheerful and spontaneous with his elder and younger brothers.

XXIX

1. If a good man teach the people for seven years, they can go to war.

XXX

1. He said: To send an untrained people to war is to throw them away.

BOOK FOURTEEN

Hsien Wan
Hsien asked

I

1. Hsien asked what is shameful. He said: When the country has a good government to be thinking only of salary; when the country has bad government, to be thinking only of salary: that is shameful.

II

1. "When the letch to get on, to make a show, when resentments and greeds aren't given way to; that makes manhood?"
2. He said: That constitutes doing what's difficult. As to its being full manhood *(humanitas)*, I don't know.

III

1. He said: Loving comfort, cuddling domesticity, is not enough to make a scholar (scholar-officer, *shih*).

IV

1. He said: When the country is decently governed: daring

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words; daring acts. When the country is not decently governed, daring acts and conventional speech. [Sun *in first tone, a grandson; in 4th: Prudent, docile, reserved.*]

V

1. He said: He who has the *virtu* to act on his inwit must have words, but he who has words needn't necessarily act according to conscience. He who is manly must have courage, audacity, but he who is audacious needn't necessarily have full *humanitas*, manhood.

VI

1. Nan-kung Kuo said to Kung-tze: Yi was a good archer, Ao could drag a boat along on land, neither died a natural death. Yu and Chi did their own farm-work and rose to be emperors. The big man didn't reply. Nan-kung Kuo went out. He said: A proper man, that! what a man ought to be like. Respects conscientious action as a man should.

VII

1. He said: Superior men aren't always complete; no mean man has manhood.

The language is very close; one might say, a man can have the voice of his ancestry within him, without attaining complete *humanitas*. No mean man has *humanitas*.

VIII

1. He said: Love exists, can it be other than exigent? Where there is sincerity (mid-mind, mid-heart) can it refrain from teaching?

["*word-each.*" 2338. hui[4]. *Again it is instruction by sorting out terms. Can you get the centre of the mind, without terminology?*]

IX

1. He said: Drawing up the decrees (government orders) P'i Shan invented the straw (i.e., made the rough drafts), Shih-shu inched the words* and discussed them with the Chef du Protocole (the *Hsing jen*, official in charge of travelling envoys), Tze-Yu combed 'em out and polished 'em, and Tze-Chan of Tung Li added the beauties.

*P. (?) *les examinait attentivement et y placait les dits des anciens.*

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X

1. Someone asked about (this) Tze-Chan. He said: A kind man.

2. Asked about Tze-Hsi. He said: That bloke! That one! [*If you accept Legge's interpretation, but the* pi tsai *might be perhaps taken as: "just another,* uomo qualunque." *There just isn't enough in the text to indicate tone of voice: query, alas? or what will you!*]

3. Asked about Kwan Chung. He said: *Jen yeh**, man who snatched from Po chief, P'ien, a city of three hundred (L. families), (L. the latter) ate coarse rice till his teeth were gone (L. and current, till death) without a grumbling word. [*L.'s note, that the dispossessed respected Kwan to this extent.*]

XI

1. He said: To be poor without grumbling or resentments is difficult; easy to be rich and not haughty.

XII

1. He said: Mang Kung-ch'o for being an elder (senex, senator) of the Chao or Wei, has it in abundance (easily more than fill the pattern requirements), couldn't make it as Great Officer of Tang or Hsieh.

XIII

1. Tze-Lu asked about the perfect man (the man of perfect focus).

He said: As if he had Tsang Wu-chung's knowledge, Kung-ch'o's freedom from greed, Chwang of Pien's bravery, Zan Ch'iu's versatile talents, culture enough for the rites and music, he'd have the wherewithal for human perfection.

2. Said: At present why need we such perfect humanity; to see chance of profit and consider equity, to see danger and be ready to accept one's fate, not to forget the level words of a compact made long ago, that also would make a focus'd man (a man brought to the point, perfect).

XIV

1. Asking about Kung shu Wan, he said to Kung-ming Chia: Do you stick by the statement that your big man doesn't talk, doesn't smile, doesn't accept anything?

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*Possibly wider reading wd/ enlighten as to bearing of Chinese equivalents of, Oh, ugh, and ah! and any flavour that might have been kept in a strictly oral tradition as to tone of voice used. Here it seems to be approbative, and the *tsai* seems pejorative in verse 2.

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2. Kung-ming Chia replied: That's from rumours (reports) overrunning the limit. My big man talks when it's the time, whereby he does not bore with his talking; smiles when pleased, thereby not boring with grins; when it is just to take, he accepts, thus he don't wear people out with taking. He said: Yes, does he really do that?

XV

1. He said: Tsang Wu-chung flowing thru Fang, asked Lu to appoint a successor; although you say this is not bringing pressure to bear on a prince, I won't stand by that definition.

XVI

1. He said: Duke Wan of Tsin was wily and not correct, [chüeh$^{2\text{-}5}$; wily *from words and an awl, clouds of three colours, hypocrite. P. admirably:* un fourbe sans droiture.]

Duke Hwan of Ch'i was correct and not wily.

XVII

1. Tze-lu said: Duke Hwan executed the Ducal-son (his brother) Chiu; Shao Hu died [L. with his boss], Kwang Chung did not die, say, is that inhumane (unmanly?)?

2. He said: Duke Hwan gathered the princes, not with weapons and war cars: Kwan Chung's energy (strength) that was; is that manly? It is manly.

XVIII

1. Tze-Kung [*not to be confused with Kung (fu) tze*] said: I'd give it that Kwan Chung was lacking in humanity, Duke Hwan had his brother Chiu bumped off, and (Kwan Chung) couldn't die, but came back and worked with Hwan as (Prime Minister).

2. He said: Kwan Chung reciprocal'd, aided Duke Hwan as prime minister, overruling the princes; unified and rectified the empire, and people till today receive the benefits. But for Kwan Chung we'd be wearing our hair loose and buttoning our coats to the left.

3. You want him to behave like a common man or woman, who could end in a creek or ditch without anyone's being the wiser?

XIX

1. Kung-shu Wan's minister, the Great Officer Hsien, rose shoulder to shoulder with Wan in this Duke's (court).

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2. Confucius hearing this said: Wan's the name for him [*Wan,* accomplished, having real culture] on that count.

XX

1. He was speaking of the evil government of the Duke Ling of Wei (Nan-tze's husband). K'ang-tze said: A man like that, how come he don't lose (his state)?

2. Kung-tze said: The second brother Yu looks after guests and strangers; the ecclesiastic T'o looks after the dynastic temple; Wang-sun Chia looks after the army corps and regiments, men like that, how lose his (state)?

XXI

1. He said: If a man don't say what he means, it's difficult to shape business to it, action to it. [*L. and M. take the* put se *as meaning immodest. Pictogrammic interpretation at least as interesting.*]

XXII

1. Chan Ch'ang murdered the Duke of Ch'i.

2. Confucius took a bath, went to court, and made formal announcement to the Duke Ai, in these words: Chan Ch'ang has murdered his prince; this invites punishment.

3. The Duke said: Inform the Three Great.

4. Kung-tze said: Coming (in rank) just after the Great Officers, I did not venture to leave my prince uninformed. (My prince) says inform the Three Great.

5. He announced it to the Three, (who pled) *non possumus.* Kung-tze said: Coming just after the Great Officers, I did not dare omit the announcement.

XXIII

1. Tze-lu asked about serving a prince. He said: Don't cheat him, stand up to him [L. withstand him to his face].

XXIV

1. He said: A proper man progresses upward (far), a mean man progresses downward (far).

Might almost say: goes far up, far down. All the way through, penetrates upward or downward. *Covers the meaning:* his mental penetration goes upward, or downward.

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XXV

1. He said: In the old days men studied to make themselves, now they study to impress others.

XXVI

1. Chu Po-yu sent a man to Confucius.

2. Kung-tze sat with him and questioned him: What's your boss doing?

Replied: "My big man wants to diminish the number of his errors, and cannot." The messenger went out. Kung-tze said: Some messenger, isn't he?

XXVII

1. He said: Not in a particular government office, don't plan to run it.

XXVIII

1. Tsang-tze (his son-in-law) said: A proper man's thoughts do not go outside (the sphere of) his office. [Yi King *diagram* 52, *eight characters, here seven, omitting one.*]

XXIX

1. He said: A proper man is ashamed of words [L. modest in speech], and goes beyond (them) in action. [*Also:* ashamed of words that exceed his action.]

XXX

1. He said: A proper man's mode of life is three-ply. I can't make it: manhood without regrets; knowing, he is without suspicion; courageous and therefore without anxiety.

2. Tze-Kung said: Boss, that's the way you go on yourself.

XXXI

1. Tze-Kung square-measured men (one by another). Confucius said: Tze, you must have heavy talents, *n'est-ce pas?* Anyhow, I haven't got the spare time.

XXXII

1. He said: Not worried that others don't know me, worried by my incapacities.

XXXIII

1. He said: Not anticipating deceit or calculating on infidelity [L. anticipate attempts to deceive him, nor think beforehand of not being believed. *Might even be:* don't oppose deceit (to de-

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ceit) or calculate on a man's lies, or lying], but to be quick to spot a hoax when it happens, man who can do this must have solid sense?

XXXIV

1. In course of conversation (old) Wei-shang Mau, said to him: Hummock, my boy, how do you manage to roost when there's a roost going, do you manage it by an oily tongue?

2. He said: I don't dare oil the tongue, but I hate stick-in-a-rut-ness (hate being boxed in with frowst).

XXXV

1. He said: A horse is grade A not because of strength but from a balance of qualities (proportionate ensemble).

This is another definition, directing thought to the composition of the ideogram itself. A "separate differences horse," extraordinary, yes, defined by the ch'eng, *with sense of weighing of the grain, good grain, agreeable etc.* (383) vid. *also alternations* (3067).

XXXVI

1. Someone said what about returning straight goodness for injury [L. kindness for injury]?

2. He said: What do you do to repay someone who acts straight with you?

3. See straight when someone injures you, and return good deeds by good deeds.

L. has the old: justice for injury, kindness for kindness. *This does not exhaust the contents of the ideograms.* Yüan (4th): *murmur, harbour resentment. Allay resentment by straightness, watch a man who harbours resentment against you. Give frank act for frank act. Understanding of Confucius has been retarded by wanting to fit his thought into gross occidental cliches.*

XXXVII

1. He said: The extent to which no one understands me!

2. Tze-kung said: How do you make out no one understands you (knows you)?

He said: I do not harbour resentment against heaven, I study what is below and my thought goes on, penetrates upward. Is it heaven that knows me? [*Not id. but cf/Aristotle: generals* FROM *particulars.*]

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XXXVIII

1. Kung-po Liao slandered [*currently "smeared"*] Tze-Lu to Chi-sun [*cd. be:* definitely brought formal charge against him, *or:* laid an information, pejorative, or definitely false]. Tze-fu Ching-po told of it, saying: The big man is certainly having his intentions misled (direction of his will deflected) by Kung-po Liao, I have strength enough to have him executed in the market place or in court. [*i. e. as common criminal or great officer*].

2. He said: If my mode of living is to make headway, or if my process is to go to waste, it is destined [*seal and mouth of heaven*]; what can Kung-po Liao do about that decree?

XXXIX

1. He said: Some with solid talents get away from their generation.

2. Those nearest (that solidity) retire from a particular locality.

3. The next grade get away from dazzle (display).

4. Those next get away from words [the dominion of catch phrases. *Cd/ even be:* stop talking].

5172, in various connotations. (i): *look down upon. rad/* 160. *"bitter". A cross under rad/* 117. *looks not unlike a graph of a spinning-whorl.*

XL

1. He said: Seven men started this [L. have done this].

XLI

1. Tze-lu was passing the night at Stone Gate, the gate guard said: Where from?

Tze-lu said: The Kung clan.

Said: He's the man who knows there's nothing to be done, yet sticks with it (keeps on trying).

XLII

1. He was drumming on the musical stone in Wei, a man with a straw hamper on his back passed the door of the Kung family house, and said: What a mind he's got beating that stone, *n'est ce pas?*

2. That was that, then he said: How vulgar! Persistent,

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water on stone, water on stone. When one is not recognized that's the end of it, end it. "Over deep with your clothes on, pick 'em up when the water is shallow." (Odes I. iii. 9.)

3. He said: Certainly, no difficulty about that.

[*The text does not give one sufficient to insist on the bearing of the* kuo, 3732, *fruit.*]

XLIII

1. In the History, Tze-chang said: What's the meaning of the statement: Kao-tsung observing the imperial mourning did not speak for three years?

2. He said: Why drag in Kao-tsung, in the old days everyone did. When the sovereign died, the hundred officers carried on, getting instructions from the prime minister for three years.

XLIV

1. He said: When men high up love the rites the people are easily governed.

XLV

1. Tze-lu asked about "right 'uns." He said: (The proper man) disciplines himself with reverence for the forces of vegetation.

Said: Is that all there is to it?

Said: Disciplines himself and quiets others (rests them, considers their quiet).

Said: Disciplines himself and brings tranquillity to the hundred clans. Discipline self and quiet the hundred clans, Yao and Shun were almost in agony over that (almost painfully anxious to do that).

XLVI

1. Yuan Zang remained squatting on his heels as Kung approached.

He said: Young and not deferentially (holding the line) fraternal, come to manhood and not transmitting, old and not dying, exactly a burglarious bum. Hit him over the shin with his cane.

XLVII

1. A young Ch'ueh villager ran errands for him, someone said: Up and coming?

2. He said: I see him sit in men's chairs, walk abreast of his elders, he's not trying to fill up, he's trying to finish in a hurry.

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BOOK FIFTEEN

Wei Ling Kung
Duke Ling of Wei

I

1. Duke Ling of Wei asked Kung-tze about tactics. Kung-tze replied: I have heard a bit about sacrificial stands and dishes, I have not studied the matter of army arrangements. He left next morning.

2. In Chan, provisions cut off, those following him sickened so no one could get up.

3. Tze-Lu showing his irritation said: Does a gentleman have to put up with this sort of thing? He said: A gentleman gets obstinate when he has to; a small man dissolves (when he's up against it).

II

1. He said: Tz'u ("Grant"), you think I make a lot of studies and commit things to memory?

Replied: Aye, ain't it so?

Said: No, I one, through, string-together, sprout [*that is*: unite, flow through, connect, put forth leaf]. For me there is one thing that flows through, holds things together, germinates.

III

1. He said: Sprout, few know how to carry their inwit straight into acts.

IV

1. He said: Shun governed without working. How did he do it? He soberly corrected himself and sat looking to the south (the sovereign sat on a throne looking south), that's all.

V

1. Tze-chang asked about conduct.

2. He said: Speak from the plumb centre of your mind, and keep your word; bamboo-horse your acts [*that is*, have this quality of surface hardness, and suppleness] with reverence for the vegetative powers, even if you are among the wild men of the South and North (Man and Mo), that is the way to act. If you speak without this candour, and break your word; if you act without polish (honour) and reverence, how will it go even in your own bailiwick (department [*and*] neighbourhood)?

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3. Standing (stablishing, building up a heap) let him form a triad looking at those two powers before him (*either* facing him, *or* existing there before him).

Note the three "armstrongs," bent arms with biceps, in upper part of the ts'an *ideogram, and use of same in* The Pivot XXII, *last line.*

In his carriage let him see them hitched to the yoke [*from rad* 144, *as traces or reins. Contrast: "like a carriage with no place to hitch the traces"*], then he can proceed.

4. Tze-chang wrote these (words) on his belt.

VI

1. He said: Straight, and how! the historian Yu. Country properly governed, he was like an arrow; country in chaos he was like an arrow.

2. Some gentleman, Chu Po-yu! country decently governed, he is in office; when the government is rotten he rolls up and keeps the true process inside him.

VII

1. He said: When you can talk to a man, and don't, you lose the man; when it's no use talking to a man, and you talk to him, you waste words. An intelligent man wastes (loses) neither men nor words.

VIII

1. He said: An officer (scholar) ruling his mind, a humane man (man of full manhood) will not try to live by damaging his manhood; he will even die to perfect his humanitas.

There are probably earlier expressions of this concept; I have not yet found an earlier statement as to abolition of the death penalty. Vide supra XIII, xi.

IX

1. Tze-kung asked about this business of manhood. He said: The craftsman wanting to perfect his craft must first put an edge on his tools (take advantage of implements already there, the containers). Living in a country, take service with the big men who have solid merit, make friends with the humane scholar-officers.

X

1. Yen Yuan asked about governing.

2. He said: Go along with the seasons of Hsia [*the Hsia*

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calendar, but probably including the dates for the markets, however computed].

3. *L. & M. both say:* Use Yin state carriages. [*I think it may refer to the gauge, the wheel-spread, cf/ ref/ to uniform gauge of wheel-ruts.*]

4. Wear the Chou coronation cap [*mortar board with fringe. I suppose this is related to four-squareness, Urzahl*].

5. Music patterned to the Shao pantomimes.

6. Banish the ear-noise* of Chang, and clear out the flatterers. The tonalities of Chang are slushy, and double-talkers a danger (diddling, debauching).

XI

1. He said: Man who don't think of the far, will have trouble near.

XII

1. He said: Can't get beyond the fact; I have not seen anyone who loves acting from inwit as they love a beautiful person.

XIII

1. He said: Tsang Wan-chung like a man who has purloined his position, he knew the solid merit of Hui of Lin-hsia, and did not get him for colleague.

XIV

1. He said: Requiring the solid from himself and the trifling from others, will keep one far from resentments.

XV

1. He said: When a man don't say, "What's it like, what's it like?" I don't (bother to) compare him to anything, and that's that (*aliter*: I don't know where he'll end up).

XVI

1. He said: Gabbling all day without getting to a discussion of equity (ethics, justice), in love with being clever in a small way; hard to do anything with 'em.

XVII

1. He said: The proper man gives substance (makes the substance of his acts equity) to his acts by equity.

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* P. (excellently): *modulations.*

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Cf/ *final words of the* Ta S'eu: The treasure of a state is its equity, *or, better, as all Confucian statements treat of process not stasis:* What profits a state is its honesty.

He proceeds according to the rites, puts them forth modestly, and makes them perfect by sticking to his word. That's the proper man (in whom's the voice of his forebears).

XVIII

1. He said: The proper man is irritated by his incapacities, not irritated by other people not recognizing him.

XIX

1. He said: The gentleman is irritated if his generation die without weighing the worth of his name.

This sentence illustrates the inadequacy of "gent" as in current parlance of the last century, to translate chun tzu. cf/ Dial *essay 25 years ago. L. gives:* name not mentioned after his death. *v. weak for ch'eng* 383. *from grain rad/*

XX

1. The proper man seeks everything in himself, the small man tries to get everything from somebody else.

XXI

1. He said: The proper man is punctilious but not quarrelsome, he is for exchange, not provincial.

XXII

1. He said: The proper man does not promote a fellow for what he says; nor does he throw out a statement because of who says it.

XXIII

1. Tze-kung asked if there were a single verb that you could practice thru life up to the end.

He said: Sympathy [L. reciprocity], what you don't want (done to) yourself, don't inflict on another.

XXIV

1. He said: Whom have I run down or puffed up? If I've overpraised any one he had something worth examining.

2. This people had the stuff in 'em (the timber) which

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enabled the three dynasties to find the straight way and go along it (the timber whereby, the wherewithal).

XXV

1. Even I reach back to a time when historians left blanks (for what they didn't know), and when a man would lend a horse for another to ride; a forgotten era, lost.

XXVI

1. He said: Elaborate sentences, worked up words confuse the straightness of action from inwit, lack of forebearance in small things, messes up greater plans.

XXVII

1. He said: When the mob hate a man it must be examined; when everybody likes a man, it must be examined, and how!

XXVIII

1. He said: A man can put energy into the process, not the process into the man. [*Ovvero:* a man can practice the right system of conduct magnanimously, but the fact of there being a right way, won't make a man use it.]

XXIX

1. He said: To go wrong and not alter (one's course) can be defined (definitely) as going wrong.

XXX

1. He said: I've gone a whole day without eating, (*or even*: I've tried going a whole day without eating) and a whole night without sleep, meditating without profit, it's not as useful as studying particular data (grinding it up in the head).

XXXI

1. He said: The proper man plans right action, he does not scheme to get food: he can plow, and there be famine: he can study, and perhaps get a salary; the proper man is concerned with the right action, he is not concerned with the question of (his possible) poverty.

XXXII

1. He said: Intelligent enough to arrive, not man enough to hang onto; though he succeed, he will fail.

2. Intelligent enough to get a job, man enough to keep it, not go through his work soberly, folk won't respect him.

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3. Intelligent enough to get, man enough to hold, regular in his work but not following the correct procedure, no glory.

XXXIII

1. He said: You cannot know a proper man by small things, but he can take hold of big ones, a small man cannot take hold of great things, but you can understand him by the small.

XXXIV

1. He said: The folk's humanity is deeper than fire or water, I've seen people die from standing on fire or water. I have seen no one die from taking a stand on his manhood.

(Much of the raciness of Kung's remarks must lie in the click of a phrase, and the turning of different facets of the word.) Shen 5724, tao 6140, *if in sense of violate, one can read the remark as deep irony.*

XXXV

1. He said: Manhood's one's own, not leavable to teacher. [*Tang,* 6087, *has very interesting complex of meanings, among which:* undertake, fill an office. *L. nearer meaning:* functioning of manhood cannot be handed over to teacher, *more ironically:* pedagogue.]

XXXVI

1. He said: The proper man has a shell and a direction (*chen*[1]).

This chen *is a key word, technical, from the "Changes" it is more than the ataraxia of stoics, the insensitivity, ability to "take it." It implies going somewhere. The Confucian will find most terms of Greek philosophy and most Greek aphorisms lacking in some essential; they have three parts of a necessary four, or four parts where five are needed, nice car, no carburetor, gearshift lacking.*

He does not merely stick to a belief [*pictogram: word and lofty, or capital*].

XXXVII

1. He said: Serving a prince put reverence into the service, feeding comes second.

XXXVIII

1. He said: See that education has no snob divisions.

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XL

1. He said: Problem of style? Get the meaning across and then STOP.

XLI

1. Mien the (blind) musician called, when they reached the steps Confucius said: Steps; when they came to the mat, he said: Mat; when all were seated he said: So-and-so's there; so-and-so's over there.

2. Master Mien went out. Tze-chang asked: Is it correct speak to the music master in that way?

3. He said: That is correct when helping the blind.

BOOK SIXTEEN

Ke She
The Head of Chi

I

1. The head of the Chi clan was about to attack Chwan-yu.

2. Zan Yu and Chi-lu went to see Kung-tze, saying: The Chi Boss is going to give Chwan-yu the works.

3. Kung-tze said: Ain't that your fault, Hook?

4. It's a long time since one of the earlier kings appointed the headman of Chwan-yu to hold the sacrifices in East Mang, and it is in the middle of our own territory, the man who officiates at its chthonian and grain rites is one of our state servants, how can one attack it?

5. Zan Yu said: Our big man wants to, we two ministers are both against it.

6. Kung-tze said: Hook, Chau Zan used to say: While using your power, keep line; when you cannot, retire. How can one serve as guide to a blind man, if he do not support him, or help him up when he falls?

7. Moreover, your words err, when a tiger or rhino [P. *buffle*] gets out of its stockade, when a turtle or jewel is broken in its casket, whose fault is that?

8. Zan Yu said: But Chwan-yu is now strong, and near Pi, if he don't take it now it will make trouble for his sons and grandsons in coming generations.

9. Kung-tze said: Hook, you make a proper man sick refus-

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ing to say: I want, and needing to make a discourse about it.

10. Me, Hillock. I have heard that men who have states or head families are not worried about fewness, but worried about fairness [*potter's wheel ideogram: aliter as verb:* worried about ruling justly], not worried about scarcity, but worried about disquiet. If every man keeps to his own land, there will be no poverty, with harmony there will be no lack of population but tranquillity without upsets (subversions).

11. It's just like that. Therefore if distant people do not conform, one should attract them by one's own disciplined culture, and by honest action, when they have come in, they will quiet down.

12. You, Yu and Ch'iu, are now aides to your big man, distant tribes do not come in, and cannot come [L. he cannot attract them]. The state is divided and decadent, people are going away and splitting up, the state can't hold onto them [L. he cannot preserve it].

13. And he plans to take up shield and lance inside the territory. I am afraid the Chi grandsons' trouble is not in Chwan-yu, it is inside their own door-yard, behind their own gate-screen. [Hsiao[1], troublesome, *or even* whistling round their gate-screen. M. *gives* ch'iang, *merely as* wall. 2620.]

II

1. Kung-tze said: When the empire is decently governed, the rites, music (musical taste), police work and punitive expeditions proceed from the Child of Heaven; when the empire is not governed, these proceed from the feudal chiefs. When they are decided by these princes, they usually lose (sovereignty) within ten generations. When these (rites, etc.) proceed from the great officers the loss usually occurs within five generations; when the subsidiary ministers in charge of the states give the orders, they usually smash within three generations.

2. When the empire is properly governed the government is NOT in the control of the great officers.

3. When the empire is properly governed, the folk don't discuss it.

III

1. Kung-tze said: For five generations the revenue has not come in to the ducal house. The government was seized by the

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great officers, four generations ago, the three lines of the Hwan (Dukes) are mere epigones.

IV

1. Kung-tze said: There are three valuable friendships, and three harmful. Friendship with the straight, with the faithful [Liang, 3947 b. *not in sense as above in* XV, xxxvi, *has also sense:* considerate] and with the well-informed are an augment; making a convenience of snobs, nice softies (excellent squshies), and of pliant flatterers does one harm.

V

1. Kung-tze said: There are three pleasures which augment a man, three that harm. The pleasure of dissociating perceptions of rites and music; pleasure in other men's excellence; the pleasure in having a lot of friends with talent and character, augment; the enjoyment of swank, loafing and debauchery, harm.

VI

1. Kung-tze said: When you manage to meet a proper man, there are three committable errors: to speak when it is not up to you to speak, *videlicet* hastiness; not to speak when you should, that's called covertness; and to speak without noting a man's expression, that is called blindness.

VII

1. Kung-tze said: The proper man guards against three things; in youth before the blood and spirits have come to orderly course, he guards against taking root in luxurious appearances; at maturity when the blood and spirits are in hardy vigour, he guards against quarrelsomeness; and in old age when the blood and spirits have waned, against avarice.

VIII

1. Kung-tze said: The proper man has three awes; he stands in awe of the decrees of destiny [*heaven's mouth and seal*], he stands in awe of great men, and of the words of the sages.

2. The piker does not recognize the decrees of heaven, he is cheeky with great men, and sneers at the words of the sages.

IX

1. Kung-tze said: Those who know instinctively (as at birth) are the highest; those who study and find out, come next; those who are hampered and study come next [k'un, *hampered, a tree boxed in, limited, in poverty, chance of growth. In dis-*

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tress, weary]. Those who are boxed in [L. stupid] and do not study constitute the lowest people.

X

1. Kung-tze said: The proper man has three subjects of meditation; in seeing, that he see with intelligence [*or* with his intelligence, *definite pictogram of moving eye and light from above, very strong and very inclusive phrase*], in hearing, that he hear accurately, i.e. apprehend [*the component mind in lower rt/ of ideogram,* get the meaning], that his appearance be serene, his bearing respectful, and that his speech come from the plumb centre of his mind (not slanty), that his affairs maintain reverence [*I do not think this ideogram can be too far separated from the original source, it has to do with vegetative order*]; when in doubt, that he ask questions, and when enraged that he think of troublesome consequence; when he sees the chance of gain, that he think of equity.

Up to now we have had many definitions of words, several chapters define or dissociate categories, ref/ Ta S'eu, *testament, verses* 3,4.

XI

1. Kung-tze said: Seeing the good as if unreachable; seeing evil as if it were boiling to the touch; I have seen such men, and heard such talk.

2. Living in retirement to find out what they really want, practicing equity to carry into conduct. I have heard conversation about this, but have not seen such men.

XII

1. Duke Ching of Ch'i had a thousand quadriga, on the day of his death (even at his funeral) the people did not praise his honesty [L. not praise for single virtue]. Po-i and Shu-ch'i died of hunger 'neath Southslope Head and the folk praise them down to this day.

2. That illustrates what I was saying.

Kung-fu-tzu's son

XIII

1. Ch'an K'ang asked Po-yu if he had heard anything "different" [i.e. *from what K. told the rest of them*].

2. He replied: No, he was standing alone (one day) as I was

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passing the hall in a hurry (or going by the court-yard), he said: Studied the odes? (*Or* are you studying the odes?)

I replied: No.

"Not study the odes, won't be able to use words."

I went out and studied the Odes.

3. Another day he was again standing alone, I went by the court in a hurry. Said: Studying the rites?

Replied: No.

"If you don't study the rites you won't be able to stand up" (build up a character).

I went out and studied the Rites.

4. Those are the two things I've heard (from him).

5. Ch'an K'ang retired saying delightedly: Asked one question and got to three things. I heard of the Odes, I heard of the Book of Rites, I heard that a proper man don't nag his son.

XIV

1. The wife of the prince of a state is styled by the prince: The distinguished person; she calls herself: Small child; the people of the state call her: The Prince's distinguished person; those of other states style her: Little small sovran, and of (still) other states style her Prince's distinguished person.

BOOK SEVENTEEN

Yang Ho
(*a minister who had usurped power*)

I

1. Yang Ho wanted to see Confucius (Kung-tze), Kung-tze did not see him. He sent Kung-tze a pig. Kung-tze, timing to miss him, went out to pay his duty call, but met Yang on the road.

2. He said: I want to talk to you: keeping treasure inside you, country in chaos, call that manly?

Said: No.

"In love with work (in love with following the service) continually missing the time, call that intelligent?"

Said: No.

"Sun and moon move, the year don't wait for you."

Said: O. K. I'll take office.

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II

He said: Men are born pretty much alike, it's practising something that puts the distance between them.

III

He said: Only those of highest intelligence, and lowest simplicity do not shift. [L. cannot be changed, *text probably includes both meanings.*]

IV

(*On cultural persuasion*)

1. At Battle-Wall he heard the sound of stringed instruments and singing.

2. The big man smiled with pleasure saying: Why use an ox knife to kill a fowl?

3. Tze-yu replied, I'm the man, sir, who once heard you say: If the gentleman studies the process and loves men, the lower people will study the process and be easy to rule. [*I suppose Yen Tze-yu was in charge of this frontier town on a crag.*]

4. He said: You fellows, Yen's words are on the line, I was just joking round it.

V

1. Kung-shan Fu-zao giving trouble in the passes [field paths, 4896, short-cuts, *hence vb/* rebel] of Pi, invited him and he (Confucius) wanted to go.

2. Tze-lu was "not amused," said: Not to be done, that's that. Why must you poke into that Kung-shan gang?

3. He said: The man's invited me, suppose I go with him [*aliter:* is that empty, an empty gesture. *Depends on which sense one gives to* 6536 (*or c*) t'u], suppose he should make use of me, couldn't I create a Chou in the East?

VI

Tze-chang asked Kung-tze about manhood. Kung-tze said: To be able [neng^2, *power in union, as differing from* k'e, *power to support, hold up, carry*] to practice five things (all together) would humanize the whole empire.

(Chang) asked clarification.

Said: Sobriety (? *serenitas*), magnanimity, sticking by one's word, promptitude (in attention to detail), kindliness (*caritas*).

Serenity will shape things so that you will not be insulted.

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With magnanimity you will reach the mass.

Keep your word and others will confide [*also:* trust you enough to employ you].

By promptitude you will get thru your jobs (meritorious work).

Kindliness is enough to get results from those you employ.

VII

1. Pi Hsi invited him and he wanted to go.

Tze-Lu said: I, Sprout, am the chap who heard you say, sir, "When a man personally does evil, a proper man won't enter [won't go into (it with him)].

Pi-Hsi is in rebellion in Chung-mau. If you go, what's that like?

2. He said: I said it. But isn't it said: You can grind a hard thing without making it thin.

Isn't it said: Some white things can be dipped and not blackened. [*Cf. G. Guinicelli*].

3. Am I like a bitter melon, to be hung up and not eaten?

VIII

1. He said: Sprout, have you heard the six terms (technical terms) and the six befuddlements (overgrowings)?

Replied: No.

2. "Sit down, I'll explain 'em to you."

3. Love of manhood minus love of study: befuddlement into naïveté.

Love of knowledge without love of study: runs wild into waste incorrelation.

Love of keeping one's word, without study runs amok into doing harm.

Love of going straight without studying where to, degenerates into bad manners.

Love of boldness without love of study, leads to chaos.

Love of hard edge (hardness, stiffness) leads to impertinence.

IX

1. He said: Mes enfants, why does no one study the great Odes? [*Or more probably:* these Odes.]

2. The Odes can exhilarate (lift the will).

3. Can give awareness (sharpen the vision, help you spot the bird).

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4. Can teach dissociation. [*L. takes it as:* exchange, sociability.]

5. Can cause resentment (against evil).

L. regulate feelings ?? katharsis ?? means of dealing with resentment. I mistrust a soft interpretation.

6. Bring you near to being useful to your father and mother, and go on to serving your sovran.

7. Remember the names of many birds, animals, plants and trees.

X

He said to (his son) Po-Yu: You go to work on the Chao-South and Shao-South poems. A man who hasn't worked on the Chao-nan and Shao-nan is like one who stands with his face to a wall.

XI

He said: Rites, they say, Rites! How do we place the jewels and the silk robes? Music, they say, Music! Where do the gongs and drums stand? [*Mind on instruments not on shape of the music.*]

XII

He said: Hard as a whetstone outside and wobbly as grass (or squshy) inside is rather like a picayune fellow who bores a hole in a wall to steal.

XIII 2556

He said: These (? lenient) village prototypes are purloiners (con men) acting on a conscience not their own [*L. takes* yuan^2 (7725) *as equiv.; 7727. ? Rousseauequers*] good careful, thieves of virtue. [*P: cherchent les suffrages des villageois.* Note 7725 a.]

XIV

He said: To pass on wayside gossip and smear with scolding is to defoliate one's candour.

T'u^2 *is primarily smear, secondarily road, with binome L. and M. tell what one has heard on the road.*

General sense perfectly clear, the verse is against careless gossip and ill-natured slander, "smear-scold" is there in the pictogram if one wants it.

(To waste acts proceeding from clear conscience) is to stop acting on one's own inner perceptions.

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XV

1. He said: How can one serve a prince along with these village-sized (kinky) minds?

2. Until they get on they worry about nothing else, and, when they have, they worry about losing the advantages.

3. When they are afraid of losing (advantages, privileges) there is nothing, absolutely nothing they will not do to retain (them) (no length they won't go to).

XVI

1. He said: Men of old had three troubles which no longer exist.

2. The old uppishness was reckless (ostentatious), the present uppishness, mere dissipation;

> [*Might say,* old was hearty, present dissolute. Excess vs. pettiness, petty leaks. Exuberance vs. license. *There is nothing in such brief statements unless they are taken as fixing the meaning and usage of the words.*]

the old punctilio [attention, *cd. almost be point of honour*] was modest (implying consideration of values), the present is mere peevishness; the old simplicity was direct, the present consists in thinking you can fool others by simple wheezes, [*or simply:* is faked] and that's that.

XVII

He said: Elaborate phrases and a pious expression (L.M. insinuating) seldom indicate manliness.

XVIII

He said: I hate the way purple spoils vermilion, I hate the way the Chang sonority confuses the music of the Elegantiae, I hate sharp mouths (the clever yawp, mouths set on profits) that overturn states and families.

XIX

1. He said: I'd like to do without words.

2. Tze-kung said: But, boss, if you don't say it, how can we little guys pass it on?

3. He said: Sky, how does that talk? The four seasons go on, everything gets born. Sky, what words does the sky use?

XX

Zu Pei wanted to see Kung-tze. Kung-tze declined on account of illness. As the messenger was going out the front

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door, he took his lute and sang so that the latter could hear.

L. notes indicate that Zu had probably asked advice before and not taken it, and that the call was fake, try on.

XXI

1. Tsai Wo asked about three years' mourning, wasn't one full year enough?

2. He said: If gentlemen do not observe the rites, the rites will go to ruin; if music is not played for three years the music will slip down.

3. The old (good) grain is exhausted, the new grain has risen; fire you kindle by twirling wood is a different fire, you can stop at the end of a year.

L. put in idea that "kindling by friction we go thru all the changes of wood" on the belief that they used different kinds of wood drills at different seasons, elm, willow, in spring, date, almond in summer. I should be more inclined to think that Kung indicates a break in continuity, but ends on the note: but do it if you like. Cf. *verse 6 below.*

4. He said: You'd feel at ease eating your rice and wearing embroidered clothes?

Said: Quite.

5. He said: If you can feel easy, go ahead, but the proper man during the period of mourning does not savour sweet food, does not delight in hearing music, does not feel easy in cushy surroundings, and therefore does not indulge, but if you now feel easy about it, go ahead.

6. Tsai Wo went out.

He said: He is not fully humane, a child does not leave its parental arms till it is three; three years' mourning is observed everywhere under heaven, did (Tsai Wo) Yu have three years' parental affection?

I suggest that the mediaeval debate between active and contemplative life is moderated in the old Chinese disposition, the need of contemplative period being answered by the years of mourning.

XXII

He said: Stuffing in food all day, nothing that he puts his mind on, a hard case! Don't chess players at least do something and have solid merit by comparison?

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XXIII

Tze-lu said: Does the proper man honour bravery?

He said: The proper man puts equity at the top, if a gentleman have courage without equity it will make a mess; if a mean man have courage without equity he will steal.

XXIV

1. Tze-kung said: Does the proper man have his hatreds also?

Said: He has hates, he hates those who proclaim the ill doing of others; he hates those who live below the current and slander those above; he hates those who are bold without observing the rites (don't use their courage rightly, audacious in outraging the proper procedures), he hates those who obstinately presume and obstruct* [*or*, who are satisfied to presume and obstruct.]

2. Said: Granty, have you any hates?

"Hate those who snoop and pretend they have found out by intelligence; hate those who think brashness is courage; hate blabbers who pretend they do it from honesty."

XXV

He said: Young women and small men [*L. in sense of: flappers and house boys*] are hard to rear, familiarity loses respect, and aloofness rouses resentment.

XXVI

He said: If a man is hateful at forty he'll be so to the end.

BOOK EIGHTEEN

Wei Tze
The Viscount of Wei

I

(*Decline of the Yin Dynasty*)

1. The Viscount of Wei retired. The Viscount of Chi became a slave. Pi-kan protested and died.

2. Kung-tze said: Yin had three men (with a capital M).

II

1. Hui of Liu-Hsia, chief criminal judge, was dismissed three

* P. v. interesting and probably right "*qui s'arrêtent*," plus the explanation (*au milieu de leurs entreprises sans avoir le coeur de les achever*), i.e. stop halfway because they haven't the guts to finish.

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times. Someone said: Isn't it about time for you to clear out?

Said: Going straight and being useful to others, where would I go and not be fired three times? If I want to go crooked, what need of leaving my parental country?

III

1. Duke Ching of Ch'i awaiting Kung-tze said: I can't treat him a Chi chief, but something between that and a Mang chief.

Said: I am an old man, I can't make use of his theories (can't use the Confucian procedure). [*Thus L. but hard to get from text strictly more than* cannot use. Employ him, give him office.] Kung-tze proceeded, traveled [L. took departure].

IV

1. Ch'i folk (? the man of Ch'i) sent a present of female musicians (corps de ballet), Chi Hwan accepted them and did not hold court for three days. Confucius traveled.

V

1. The madman of Ch'u, Chieh-yu, passed Kung-tze, singing out: "Phoenix, oh Phoenix, how is your clarity fallen, no use blaming what's past, you might look out for what's to come. There's danger to anyone who goes into this present government."

2. Confucius got down (from his carriage) and wanted to talk with him but (Chieh) hurried away, so he could not.

VI

1. Ch'ang-tsu and Chieh-ni were teamed plowing [*Plowmen worked in pairs* / vide Odes etc.]. Kung-tze going by, sent Tze-lu to ask about the ford.

2. Ch'ang-tsu said: Who's that driving?

Tze-lu said: Kung Hillock.

Said: Kung Hillock of Lu?

Said: Yes.

Said: He knows the ford.

3. (Tze-lu then) asked Chieh-ni.

Chieh-ni said: Who are you, sir?

Said: I'm Sprout, secundus.

Said: A pupil of Kung Hillock of Lu?

Replied: Yes . . .

Said: "Disorder overfloods all the empire, who has the means to change it? Moreover, rather than follow a man who leaves one chief after another, better follow a scholar who has given up

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the world (this generation) altogether." He did not stop covering up the seed in his furrow.

4. Tze-lu went and reported, the big man sighed: One cannot collaborate with birds and beasts. If I don't work with these people whom can I work with? If the empire were on the right track, it would not need me, Hillock, to change it. [*Or* I would not give (myself, or effort) to change it.]

VII

1. Tze-lu was lagging behind and met an old man carrying a basket of weeds, on a staff over his shoulder. Tze-lu asked: Have you seen my big man?

The old man said: See by your arms and legs you haven't done any work; don't know the five grains one from another, who is your big man? He put down his stave and started weeding.

2. Tze-lu bowed and stood before him.

3. He kept Tze-lu for the night, killed a chicken, fixed the millet and fed him, introduced his two sons.

4. At sun-up Tze-lu went on and told of this.

He said: A recluse; sent Tze-lu back to see him again. When he arrived, the old man was gone.

5. Tze-lu said: It's not right not to take office.

You can't neglect the relations between old and young, how can he neglect the right relation between prince and minister, wishing to conserve his personal purity, he lets loose chaos in the great order. A proper man takes a government job, goes straight. He knows perfectly well perfect principles are not followed [*or* he knows in the end that they aren't (universally) followed].

VIII

1. The men who have retired: Po-i, Shu-ch'i, Yu-chung, I-yi, Chu-chang, Hui of Liu-hsia, Shao-lien.

2. He said: Not lowering their aims, not disgracing themselves, Po-i, Shu-ch'i. I'd say.

3. Can say Hui of Liu-hsia, and Shao-lien did lower their aims, did undergo personal shame, but their words were centred in reason and their acts worth consideration. That's all.

4. Can say of Yu-chung and I-yi, they went to live in retirement and talked. They kept themselves pure [M:], in their retirement they hit the mean of opportunism (wasted in mid-balance).

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5. I differ from these models, I have no categoric can and cannot.

IX

(*Dispersion of the musicians of Lu*)

1. The grand music master Chih went to Ch'i.
2. Kan, conductor for second meal, went to Ch'u.
Liao, "third meal," went to Ts'ai.
Chueh, "fourth meal," went to Ch'in.
3. The drummer Fang Shu went into the Honan [L. north of the river].
4. Wu, the hand drum, went to Han.
5. Yang the assistant conductor, and Hsiang the musical stone went to the sea.

X

1. The Duke of Chau said to the Duke of Lu, a proper man does not neglect his relatives; he does not grieve his great ministers by keeping them useless; he does not cast off the old without great reason. [L. members of old families?]

XI

1. Chau had eight officers; Po-ta; Po-kwo, Chung-tu, Chung-hwu, Shu-ya, Shu-hsia, Chi-sui, Chi-kwa.

BOOK NINETEEN

Tze-Chang

I

1. Tze-Chang said: The scholar-gentleman* sees danger and goes thru to his fate [L. sacrifice life]; when he sees a chance of getting on he thinks of equity, at sacrifices his thoughts are full of reverence for the powers of vegetation; in mourning, of grief; that is perhaps a complete definition.

II

1. Tze-Chang said: To comprehend acting straight from the conscience, and not put energy into doing it, to stick to the letter of the right process and not be strong in it, can you be doing with that sort? Does it matter what becomes of them? To believe in the right course, and not maintain it.

* The *shih* might very well have been translated knight in the age of European chivalry on various counts.

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III

1. Tze-hsia's pupils asked Tze-Chang about friendly association.

Tze-Chang said: What does Tze-hsia say?

Replied: Tze-hsia says share it with those who can and ward off those who cannot. [*L. adds "advantage you." The* chiao[1] *covers the meanings:* pay, exchange, communicate. *Say:* with whom there can be an exchange.]

Tze-chang said: Differs from what I've heard, i.e. the proper man honours solid merit and is easy on the multitude, praises the honest and pities the incompetent. If I have enough solid talent what is there in men I can't put up with? If I haven't solid merit men will be ready enough to ward me off, why should I ward off others?

IV

1. Tze-hsia said: If a mean contrivance functions there must be something in it worth attention, but carry it far: 'ware mud. That's why the proper man doesn't use it.

V

1. Tze-hsia said: To be daily aware of what he lacks, not forgetting what he can make function (capacity due to what bits of knowledge he has put together), can be defined as loving study.

VI

1. Tze-hsia said: Extending study, keeping the will hard yet supple; putting a fine edge on one's questions, and stickin' close to what one really thinks. Manhood takes root in the centre of these.

VII

1. Tze-hsia said: Artificers (the hundred works) live in a market amid the outlay of their tools to perfect their technique. [*The* szu[4] (? cf *Arab.* suk), *tools spread for use, also concurrence of shops of similar ware.*] The proper man studies so that he arrive at proceeding in the process. [*Very much:* pour savoir vivre. *Really learn how to live, up to the hilt.*]

VIII

1. Tze-hsia said: The mean man just has to gloss his faults.

IX

1. Tze-hsia said: The proper man undergoes three transfor-

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mations, at a distance: stern; gentle to approach; his words firm as a grindstone.

X

1. Tze-hsia said: A proper man keeping his word [*or:* whose word is believed] can make the people work hard; if he don't keep his word they will consider the same work an oppression. A man who keeps his word can remonstrate with his prince, if he do not keep it, the remonstrance will be taken for insult.

XI

1. Tze-hsia said: If a man does not transgress the barriers of the great virtues, he can have leeway in small (go out and in).

XII

1. Tze-Yu said: Tze-hsia's door-men and little chaps are correct in sprinkling and sweeping, answer politely, make their entries and exits, all in a model manner, these are branches, without the root, what about it?

2. Tze-hsia heard it and said: Too bad, Tze-Yu is wrong. What does a proper man's method put first and teach and put second and loaf over? By analogy with plants and trees he divides (activities) into kinds, but how could the proper man's behaviour bring false accusation against any of them? Only the sage starts out knowing all the consequences.

XIII

1. Tze-hsia said: When the man in office has an abundance (of energy) he studies; when the studious man has an abundance he goes into office.

XIV

1. Tze-yu said: Lamentation ought to stop at the end of the mourning period.

XV

1. Tze-yu said: My friend Chang can do difficult things, oh yes, but he is not completely humane.

XVI

1. Master Tsang said: Magnificent! Chang is mag-nificent, but hard to be human with him [*or:* difficult to combine all that splendour with being really human].

XVII

1. Master Tsang said: I've heard our big man say you can't

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tell all there is in a man until he is mourning his relatives.

XVIII

1. Master Tsang said: I've heard our big man say Mang Chwang was a true son, others can be that, but when it comes to his not changing his father's ministers, nor his father's mode of government, that is hard for 'em to match.

XIX

1. The Mang chief having made him chief criminal judge, Yang Fu questioned Master Tsang. Master Tsang said: The high-ups have lost the way, the people have been in disorder for a long time, when you find it out, pity 'em, don't think yourself clever.

"*A bad name*"

XX

1. Tze-kung said: "Crupper's" uncleanness wasn't as low as all that. That's why the proper man hates living at the bottom of the drain-slope where all the rot flows down.

XXI

1. Tze-kung said: A superior man's errors are like solar and lunar eclipses, when he goes wrong everyone sees it, when he comes back to course again all lift their faces. [Yang *can also mean*: trust.]

XXII

1. Kung-sun Ch'ao of Wei asked Tze-kung: How did Chung-ni (Chung secundus, Confucius) study?

2. Tze-kung said: Wan and Wu's system hadn't completely collapsed, the men of solid talent conserved the great features (the great parts of it were rooted in their memory) and the minor items were rooted in the memories of the men without talents, no one was wholly without something of Wan and Wu's method, how could the big man help studying it, though without an ordinary teacher?

XXIII

1. Shu-sun Wu-shu said to a high court officer: Tze-kung is superior to Chung-ni.

2. Tze-fu Ching-po told Tze-kung, Tze-kung said: By analogy with a house wall, mine is shoulder high, one can look over it at the house and family, and what is good in them.

3. The big man's wall is many times the height of an eight-footer, if you don't find the door and go in, you can't see the

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splendour of the feudal temple, or the hundred officers' riches.

4. But how few find the door, wasn't that big chap's remark perfectly suited to him?

XXIV

1. Shu-san Wu-shu spoke ill of Chung-ni. Tze-kung said: It's no use, you can't break him down. It's the other men that are "hillocks" [*play on Confucius' familiar name Ch'iu "hillock"*] and hummocks that one can walk up. Chung-ni, the sun, the moon you cannot walk up stairs to. Though a man wants to cut himself off what harm does that do to the sun and moon, many people see them who cannot measure a meridian. [*The pictogram is a measure of the sun-rise, rather than of capacity, as L.*]

XXV

1. Ch'an Tze-ch'in said to Tze-kung, You are overdoing this respectfulness, how is Chung-ni more talented than you are?

2. Tze-kung said: The proper man can be known from a single sentence and one sentence is enough to show what a man does not know. Can't neglect keeping the word aligned with the mind.

3. You can't reach the big man, just as you can't get to heaven by walking up stairs.

4. If the big man were in charge of a state or clan, what is properly called establishment would be established, the proper system would work, the traces would be hitched so that they would draw, energies would be harmonized. He would be splendid in life, lamented in death, how can one match him?

BOOK TWENTY

I

1. Yao said: Attent! you Shun, heaven's calendar [*sun under grain under cover*] has now pulsed through in its count to take root in your personal strength, hang onto what it is all about, hand and foot (biceps and legs) if within the four seas there be dearth and exhaustion, the defining light of heaven [L. heaven's revenue] will come to perpetual end.

2. Shun gave the same sealed order to Yü. [T'ang, *as in the* Shu IV, iii, 3.]

3. Said: I, the little child Li ("Shoe") dare to use the black victim; dare clearly announce to the Whiteness above all White-

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ness above all kings, to the Dynasty Overspreading; dare not pardon offences, nor let those who serve the spread cloth of heaven be overgrown; their report roots in the mind of the O'erspreading.

If in us, the emperor's person, be fault, it is not by the myriad regions, if the myriad regions have fault, it takes root from our person. [*Cf.* Wu, *in the* Shu V. iii.]

4. Chao had a great conferring: honest men could be rich.

5. Although he had the Chao relatives, not a matter of someone else's manhood, if the hundred clans err, it is rooted in me the one man.

6. He kept watch over the balances (weights) and the measuring [*I shd/ say* taking the sun. L./ measures], he investigated the statutes and regulations [*or better:* the functioning of the regulations, how they worked, whether they worked. *La Vie du Droit*], he combed out the useless officials, and the government of the Four Coigns went ahead.

7. He built up wasted states, restored broken successions, promoted men who had retired, and the people of the empire returned to good sense.

8. What he put weight on was feeding the people, mourning and offerings.

9. By magnanimity reached to everyone; by keeping his word got their trust; got thru a lot of work by attention to detail and kept them happy by justice.

II

1. Tze-chang asked Kung-tze how one should carry on government.

He said: Honour the five excellences and throw out the four evils.

Tze-chang said: How do you define the five excellences?

He said: The proper man [*here,* man-in-authority] is considerate without being extravagant, energetic (or even urging) without grumbling, desires without greed, is honourable without hauteur, and boldly protective without ferocity.

2. Tze-chang said: What do you mean by being considerate not extravagant? He said: Cause the people to profit by what he profits by (their cut of grain), isn't that being considerate without extravagance? When he picks out the right work for them, they work, who will grumble; desiring manhood and

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attaining it, is that greed? Whether he is dealing with many or few, with small matter or great, the proper man does not venture to be churly, is not that being honourable and not haughty? The proper man adjusts his robe and cap, honours what is clearly worthy of honour, [Occhio per la mente. *If a strict stylist is distinguishing* chien (4) 860 M *and* shih (4) 5789, *the former wd/ be* eye-sight *and the latter, I take it,* mind-sight, intellectual clarity] with dignity so that others look up to him and even fear him, isn't that severity without ferocity?

3 Tze-chang said: How define the four evils? He said: Not to teach people and then put them to death is cruelty; not to warn people and then expect them to have things finished perfectly, is called oppression. [*L. admirably:* to require suddenly the full tale of work without having given warning.] To be dilatory (sloppy) in giving orders and exigent in expecting them carried out at the precise date is cheating.

> 6752. *This* tse (2-5) *certainly cannot be translated* thief *in all contexts, it is an abusive term, centre of meaning seems to be nearer to "cheat" though theft is certainly included. "Con game" with violence, any thieving trick.*

As in giving to others, to come out and give in a stingy manner

> *Thus L., but if we are getting down to brass tacks, I should think the* ch'u na: go out-insert, *might refer to the familiar "kick-back," getting personal repayment from an official payment to another.*

called having assistant-officers.

> *Unless it refers to* kick-back *or something more than manner, seems hardly great enough to be listed among the four hateful or evil things.* 4809. o(4-5). *That is to say it wd/ seem to be stretching the* o(4-5) *into a milder meaning than it usually has in the* Four Books. P. on appelle cela se comporter comme un collecteur d'impots.

III

1. He said: Not to know the decree [the sealed mouth. *L. adds "of heaven," not to recognize destiny*] is to be without the means of being a proper man (the ancestral voice incomplete).

2. Not to know the rites is to be without means to construct.

3. Not to know words (the meaning of words) is to be without the fluid needful to understand men.

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Blue-Black

ROGER SHATTUCK

I

To raise the ceilings of their lives, to know
The tall dimensions of a dark more huge
Than their protecting caves, men found a color
For the sky, umbrella for their eyes.

Together art and artifice distilled
The first essential lie, most lovely blue.
Men left their dens to bask beneath this shade—
Lips for a sun whose fangs are sheathed in air.

The antiseptic palettes of this day
(Matisse, Dufy) contrive the cobalt and
The turquoise masks which give the sky cosmetic
Courage in the face of death behind.

II

Today, this clearest, coldest day whose mirth
Is fragile in the snow and rings space
Like a chime, there is no artisan on earth
Could tell me that the sky is not jet black.

Space shows its paintless face today. My eyes
Rise out of sight beyond the blue, my heathen
Vision stirs too deeply in the sky,
And I am dead from darkness in the day.

The Summer Beach

JOHN DILLON HUSBAND

The summer beach is lonelier than sand.
Clear the children's voices call and fall;
The mothers knit and sit. Inshore the land
Ripens to peach and apple. The lighthouse call

Blinks messages to hidden ships or smoke.
Still or in motion the populated air
Is full of industry; love that we spoke
Elbows the commerce of an announcer's chair.

Only the children can be private, now.
Their eyes pick us like fruit. Effortless, they prove
(Furrowing us like foam at the ship's prow)
We are hieroglyphs on stone. We stand; they move.

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CHRONICLES

Notes on the Theater

FREDERICK MORGAN

THE TWO MOST interesting new plays of the season were both verse dramas, and both sufficiently superior to the usual Broadway product to cause one to suspect that they would encounter some resistance from an audience that can swallow (and keep down) a *Mister Roberts* or a *Death of a Salesman.* The success of *The Cocktail Party* may be attributed to that craft and "guile" of its author mentioned by William Arrowsmith elsewhere in these pages, supported by incomparably fine direction and performances. The late production of *A Phoenix Too Frequent,* on the other hand, was so inept that the play had no chance of coming across to the audience, and its failure was inevitable. Since part of T. S. Eliot's strategy in *The Cocktail Party* lay in making his verse, for the most part, as self-effacing and transparent as possible, and since the audience was blocked from a proper reception of that of *Phoenix,* one cannot yet answer the interesting question of how the Broadway audience would react to a new play whose diction was forthrightly and unmistakably "poetic." The test will come when Gielgud brings over *The Lady's Not For Burning* in the fall.

Christopher Fry's plays are discussed by William Arrowsmith elsewhere in this issue, and the text of *A Phoenix Too Frequent* appears in full. The only point I am concerned to make here is that this play, although a small one, is very delightful and expert, and certainly performable. All that is required are actors who can speak the lines for what is in them, and a production that is faithful to the intentions of the play. In view of what actually happened, it is particularly fortunate that the text can be made available now; for very few reviewers (Joseph Wood Krutch in *The Nation* is the only one who comes to mind) were discerning enough to distinguish the excellence of the play through the distortions of the production. The direction was chiefly at fault. The performers were none of them brilliant, perhaps, but visually they fitted the parts well, and could have done much better with their lines under proper direction. Someone was afraid of Fry's poetry, felt that it could not "go" on Broadway, that it had to be apologized for. The outcome of this cowardice was a painful insecurity of intention that communicated itself to the audience within thirty seconds from the rise of the curtain. It was evident in the intonations of the performers, who were not clear as to how seriously or unseriously they should be "taking" their lines, and in the tendency to slur over—to some extent verbally, but still more in terms of the rhythm and pace of the direction—the passages that were felt to be excessively poetic, in order to come to rest, with obvious relief, on one of Doto's witticisms, or on a piece

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of low-comedy stage business. The realistic ironies and witticisms, which are delightful as they stand and valuable to the texture of the play as counterpoint to the more idealized poetry, were unmercifully isolated, built up to, and hammered down on like so many gags. The natural result of this distorted approach was that the audience was conditioned to find any artificiality or elaboration of language ridiculous. The poetry, and the job the poetry should have been allowed to do, were quite thoroughly undercut; and the play was lost. For the record, I shall only add that *Phoenix* was produced as part of a double bill, and that the other one-act play that was used as curtain-raiser was embarrassingly bad.

The text of *The Cocktail Party* is now available,[1] and the play has been sufficiently discussed to make necessary here only the briefest sort of plot-summary. The four central characters, with whose destinies the action is concerned, are a married couple, Edward and Lavinia Chamberlayne, and the young man and woman, named Peter Quilpe and Celia Coplestone, with whom they have been carrying on their respective extramarital love affairs. This group of characters is seen as caught in the human predicament, struggling with the difficulties and trivialities of day-to-day existence. Opposed to them, but not in a hostile sense, is another group of three characters, who come to be known as "Guardians" and are human in appearance but, I take, it, angelic in essence. These personages have each some sort of local habitation and a name: one is a Harley Street specialist, another a prying old society woman, the third a widely traveled civil servant; but they are detached, self-contained, uninvolved, and united in a kindly conspiracy to put salvation in the way of the others. Through the machinations of the Guardians, each of the other characters is brought to the point of self-knowledge and of decision, and each chooses for himself the particular road that will lead to his salvation. For the Chamberlaynes, this means reconciliation and mutual sympathy; for Peter, the intelligent pursuit of his métier, which happens to be movie-making; for Celia, it means sainthood: she joins a nursing order, and is eventually martyred at a remote colonial outpost. In each case, self-knowledge is the prerequisite.[2]

Eliot's concern in his plays has always been to dramatize the polarity between nature and grace, between man's predicament in the contemporary secular world and the Christian way of salvation. The plays have of necessity

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[1]Harcourt, Brace. $3.00.

[2]The Chamberlaynes attain self-knowledge in the great consulting-room scene with Sir Henry Harcourt-Reilly, the Harley Street "specialist" (Act II in the published text; Act II, Scene I in the Broadway production). For Celia, it has perhaps come sooner, after her rejection by Edward in the first act, so that her consultation with Reilly later in this same scene involves rather the becoming aware of the full implications of her position. Peter Quilpe attains self-knowledge in the last scene of the play (Act III in the published text; Act II, Scene 2 in the Broadway production) after he hears the news of Celia's death. Thus it is too soon for him to be included in the words spoken by the Guardians at their libation at the conclusion of the consulting-room scene.

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been experimental, and he has followed somewhat different methods in each. In *Murder in the Cathedral* he assumed a Christian audience, took the theological concept of martyrdom as starting-point, and built an extremely sophisticated and almost flawless play that is a demonstration of orthodox doctrine. The values of the modern world are recognized in the persons of the four Tempter-Knights, but they are felt chiefly as representing a threat from outside: the sympathies of the audience are assumed to rest with the martyred Thomas. But *Murder in the Cathedral* was written for a special, and ecclesiastical occasion; Eliot has always recognized that the values of the Tempters are likely to be those of the audience for which he must write. In the later plays, he has reversed his method, and centered the action on characters who are representative of the modern world, and with whom the audience is invited to identify itself. That very interesting failure, *The Family Reunion,* is the pivotal work in this respect. The hero of this play, Harry Monchensey, occupies a position midway between those of Thomas and of Celia Coplestone. He is meant to be seen as a contemporary, secular figure, but there adheres to him a certain aura of unwarranted predestination, on the strength of which the audience is to be persuaded to favor his cause. This, I believe, it cannot quite do. Celia's predestination, in *The Cocktail Party,* is of a different sort; it may not be completely dramatized, and I shall have more to say on this, but it is seen objectively, and never becomes the projection of some compulsion in the playwright. This is another way of saying that in the new play Eliot has passed beyond the near-heretical romanticism of *The Family Reunion,* with its overemotional stress on the central character and consequent depletion of the world about him.

Any effort to redeem the contemporary theater from its degraded naturalism is to be welcomed, and Eliot's is perhaps the most important now being made in our language. The problem of giving the drama a supernatural dimension, like that of adapting to it a suitable poetic diction, is today a very difficult one. The playwright may assume a world, removed in time or place from our own, in which the supernatural is taken as actually present, interfusing the natural world, an inseparable part of the *donnée.* This is the method, for example, of André Obey's *Noah,* which was recently given a competent and delightful production by the Y.M.H.A. theater group. But one of the necessary consequences of this approach is that the play, however perfect, must inevitably affect the audience as something apart, not directly connected with its own concerns. This makes for diminution of scope. *Noah* is an accomplished and brilliant play, free of cheapness and sentimentality, but for all its excellence it seems somehow remote and special. A similar objection might be raised against *Murder in the Cathedral,*[3] although this is a very different sort of work that makes some provision for contemporary attitudes.

[3]See Francis Fergusson's *The Idea of a Theater* for stimulating discussions of *Noah* and *Murder in the Cathedral.* Cf. also his notion of the "partial perspectives" of the modern theater.

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Eliot's new strategy is, as I have said, the reverse of that of *Murder in the Cathedral* in that it centers the action on characters representative of the modern, secular world. The key to the method is to be found in the well-known sentences from his introduction to Pascal's *Pensées*:

> The Christian thinker—and I mean the man who is trying consciously and conscientiously to explain to himself the sequence which culminated in faith, rather than the public apologist—proceeds by rejection and elimination. He finds the world to be so and so; he finds its character inexplicable by any non-religious theory; among religions he finds Christianity, and Catholic Christianity, to account most satisfactorily for the world and especially for the moral world within; and thus, by what Newman calls "powerful and concurrent" reasons, he finds himself inexorably committed to the dogma of the Incarnation.

The method of *The Cocktail Party,* like that of *Murder in the Cathedral,* is the method of demonstration, but it is a demonstration that uses our modern world as a starting-point, and proceeds from it, by means of reason and self-knowledge, into faith. It is also the method of parable, by means of which stock characters take on significance in terms of a new dimension of reference. Thus the play is neither an exercise in smart parlor-drama à la Noel Coward, nor a vague and confused mystical treatise. (These have been the most common misreadings.) It is deeply concerned with the possibility of mystical experience within the contemporary context; but it is the possibility that is dramatized, not the experience itself. The realm of transcendent experience remains off-stage; it is assumed, referred to more or less indirectly; what goes on on the stage points to it. The possibility is explored in no vague fashion, but with an almost mechanical precision; and the conventions of the parlor-drama are the machinery which the playwright has seen fit to use. And here he has shown considerable dramatic tact: in the persons of the Guardians, for example, who are fixed as figures in the parlor-drama before their full significance is more than hinted at, and in the verse itself, which is established from the start as "right" for the play and is capable of whatever degree of tension may be required. There is no dilution and no confusion here, and it seems pointless to object to the method as such, since this only amounts to stating a preference for a different type of play and for a different type of mentality in action. What we have, through most of the play, is entire economy and precision, profundity of analysis, and almost incredible "rightness" and brilliance of expression. If the method also imposes certain limitations—dryness, intellectuality, restriction of possibilities in the natural world—yet, given Eliot's talents and the present condition of the theater, the method was necessary if the play was to be written at all.[4]

[4]It is the failure to recognize this fact, incidentally, that accounts for the futility of objections to the play like those raised by William Barrett in *Partisan Review.*

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Taken on its own terms, *The Cocktail Party* is a fine play and a very considerable artistic success. The exposition in the first act is masterful; the consulting-room scene, in which the Chamberlaynes and Celia make their fatal decisions, is probably one of the high spots of the modern theater. The last scene, on the other hand, is the least successful, and seems to have proved a stumbling-block to many. It is centered on the account given by Alex, the civil servant, of Celia's martyrdom at the hands of the natives of "Kinkanja," and on the effect of this announcement on the other characters. Alex performs the function of messenger, describing at length the off-stage apotheosis of the hero. There is some limp writing (the only limp writing of the play) toward the beginning of the scene, when Alex, prior to his revelation, is giving a preliminary description of Kinkanja, and also in the conversation attending Peter Quilpe's return. It is as if the playwright, after the unravelment of the consulting-room scene, had not quite known, "two years later," how to take hold. Matters improve in the latter half of the scene, and the verse regains its vitality; but, on the whole, it is doubtful whether this last scene comes off dramatically at all, and whether *The Cocktail Party* must not be added to the long list of very good plays with unsuccessful endings. By comparison to the immediacy with which the initial situation is presented and worked out, the entire business of Kinkanja and of Celia's martyrdom seems remote and unreal. It is not that we disbelieve that such a thing could happen, but that, in dramatic terms, it has not happened. Consequently, the attempts made by the other characters to grasp the full significance of the event seem excessively contrived and mechanical. The last scene would seem to represent a departure from drama into an on the whole distinguished, but undramatic sort of summation, and as such to be a comparative failure. And it seems likely that this failure is due to the playwright's having attempted something very difficult and very important that lay beyond the scope of his method.

It is interesting that in the interview with *World Review* reported by William Arrowsmith, Eliot should refer to the necessity for turning away from the Theater of Ideas to the Theater of Character. For it seems to me that Eliot has emerged as a very distinguished dramatist whose work displays the typical excellences and suffers the typical limitations of a theater of ideas. Be that as it may, he is almost the only person writing in English for the theater in whose work we can find life, significance, and hope for the future; in *The Cocktail Party* he has at last written a play that as a theater piece is entirely performable, and that will probably make a permanent addition to dramatic literature.

Of the other new plays produced on Broadway this season, four seem to be worth some mention. The best production is that of Carson McCullers' *The Member of the Wedding*, a dramatization of her novel. The setting is a small

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town in Georgia; the action is centered on a motherless tomboy, Frankie Addams, and her adolescent longings to achieve solidarity and identify herself with something in the world outside. Her older brother is to be married, and in the innocent excess of her love for the bride and groom, Frankie sees herself as going away with them and sharing their life after the wedding. Frankie's fantasies are set off against the simple but experienced wisdom of her father's cook, Berenice, and the childish innocence, and ignorance, of her little cousin, John Henry. In the first half of the play there is little or no dramatic action, but a mood is established that rings charmingly true, built of the playright's sense for the right detail and for authentic dialogue, and despite a certain repetitiousness. When Frankie, Berenice, and John Henry sit down at the kitchen table to a game of cards, we have something that is "real" in a way that Broadway seldom offers, something more real, in a sense, than anything that goes on in a more intelligent and successful play like *The Cocktail Party*. Unfortunately, mood is not enough for a three-act play. At the moment of climax, the scene in which the wedding reception takes place and Frankie is disillusioned, the dramatic substance of the play evaporates. Various important and sensational events take place off-stage, without being realized dramatically, and I felt that the resolution in the last scene, in which Frankie is shown to have "grown" and found equilibrium, was forced and unjustified. The production is benefited by the excellent performances of Ethel Waters as Berenice, Julie Harris as Frankie, and Brandon de Wilde as John Henry. Miss Waters is an actress of tremendous charm and distinction, and Miss Harris was admirably "inside" a difficult role. It is hard to see how either of them could have been better, and they have two of the most beautiful speaking voices that can presently be heard on the stage. If this seems like a minor detail, I can assure you that in this play it is not.

The Innocents, a dramatization by William Archibald of *The Turn of the Screw*, cannot be rated as a successful play, as it ultimately lacks an independent dramatic existence. The effect of the whole, as of each of its parts, is irresistibly to send one back to the James story, so that the play is best judged as a commentary on the original. (How persons unfamiliar with *The Turn of the Screw* would react to the dramatization, I cannot be sure: I suspect they would find it inconclusive.) As such, it has a certain value; and if a person has a particular interest in the story, as I do, he may be interested to follow out the success of the experiment. The children, necessarily, say more than they do in the story; some of this is fairly appropriate stuffing, some is out of tone: there is a scene, reminiscent of Arthur Machen rather than of James, in which the children stage a masquerade, after which Miles sings a ballad to his "demon lover," presumably Quint, out in the shadows. The reviewers, in general, have seen this as a straight "ghost" play which repudiates the "hallucinatory" theory advanced as an interpretation of the story. With

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the exception of the scene described above, which "leads" excessively, this is not strictly true. The apparitions of Quint and Miss Jessel actually appear on the stage, but there is never any objective evidence that they are seen by any of the persons in the play except the new governess. But the *audience* sees them, and this tends automatically to establish their independent existence in the world of the play. What the play does not do, and what perhaps no play could, is provide an adequate substitute for James's prose style and his handling of the point of view. The acting is intelligent on the whole, although Beatrice Straight, in the central role of the governess, maintains her performance too insistently at one pitch. The Mielziner set is, in its way, magnificent.

The late Jean Giraudoux' *Intermezzo,* first performed in Paris in 1933, deals with a different kind of visitation. The ghost of a young man haunts the neighborhood of a small French provincial town, making frequent out-of-door appearances to a pretty young schoolteacher. At the same time there are alarming signs of disorder in the community: dogs bite their masters, wives cuckold their husbands, the local millionaire fails to win the lottery for the first time in history, everyone is irresponsibly happy. The forces of law and order, in the person of a provincial Inspector, attempt to restore normalcy: the ghost is executed, but comes to life again. At last he is conclusively exorcised, as the schoolteacher bestows her hand on a solid young government official; she is saved from her affinities with the other world, and France saved from an invasion by the dead. The adaptation of this play by Maurice Valency, under the title *The Enchanted,* failed in a most disappointing way to convey the full charm and brilliance of the original. It is, of course, difficult to bring over into another language the many associations and overtones that are so richly and specifically French; but there was no excuse for the dullness of the direction, its lagging pace, the failure to grip the whole which resulted in the obscuring of the play's intentions, and the disparity of acting styles. There were some fine moments, for which Malcolm Keen, as the Inspector, was chiefly responsible, but these were also, perhaps, the easiest and the broadest ones. Finesse was required, and finesse was lacking.

Gian-Carlo Menotti's *The Consul* is put together of such shoddy materials that one wonders what saves it from being entirely objectionable. The answer seems to lie in its frank theatricality and in a certain lack of pretentiousness. *The Consul* is opera, of no very high caliber; it is superficial, trashy, full of *coups de théâtre* of the most obvious sort derived from conventional operatic melodrama; at the same time it displays, on its own level, considerable craftsmanship, and is comparatively free of falsity and bloat of the Broadway sort. Without ever attaining either dramatic or operatic distinction, it is yet possessed of some momentary vitality as melodrama. The story is right out of the newspapers (and not far enough out). The heroine, Magda Sorel, is the wife of a resistance leader in an unidentified European country. When her

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husband is forced to flee, by way of the underground, to a neighboring state, he directs her to secure a visa and follow him with their baby. The remaining scenes show her hounded in her apartment by the secret police, and waiting in line at the Consulate with various other hopeless individuals, prevented by bureaucratic red tape from getting her visa. Her baby and her mother-in-law die, and at the end, in despair of joining her husband (who has been trapped in the meanwhile), she pokes her head into the gas stove and dies, after a tedious dream interlude, just as the telephone rings with her reprieve. Put directly on the stage as I have told it, this story would have tended to become another *Death of a Salesman,* unbearably dull, morbid, and soggy. The effect of the music and of the transmutation into operatic form is to make it seem, instead, a rather slick and none too consistent topical framework for conventional melodramatic effects. Even at this level *The Consul* becomes monotonous, with a last act that drags. It is, in short, in no respect an important work; but it is sufficiently out of the ordinary to be of some interest provided one does not approach it with undue anticipation. The performances are good.

There have been revivals, on and off Broadway, of plays by Shakespeare, Shaw and Strindberg; the sum total of achievement here is not impressive.

The Theatre Guild sponsored an *As You Like It* that was lumpish, cloying, and thoroughly unsatisfactory. It is depressing to see a play that should be, if one gave it half a chance, all verve, sparkle and pace, bogged down by sugar-candy sets, irrelevant stage business and actors unable to speak poetry. The clear outlines were blurred, the salient points blunted. The only respectable acting was to be found in a few of the minor roles: Corin, Oliver, Adam. Katharine Hepburn's Rosalind was energetic, but unfocused. The other important parts were all badly acted, and what is worse, badly acted each in a different way.

A much better Shakespearean revival, earlier in the season, was the *Twelfth Night* presented by Roger Stevens and directed by Valentine Windt. The directorial touch was light, the tempo fast, the sets unobtrusive. The production had unity and coherence, and if some of the actors were less than adequate, they were not allowed to get out of hand. There was also one excellent performance, the Malvolio of Arnold Moss. The moral to be drawn here seems to be that one can achieve a pleasant, if not necessarily a great, production of Shakespeare simply by not getting in his way—by grasping and keeping in mind the unity of the play, and by avoiding opportunistic compromises with a debased public taste.

Having had in the past various unpleasant things to say about Maurice Evans and Margaret Webster, I am pleased to report that their production of *The Devil's Disciple* was worth seeing. The play is not one that can be readily damaged by their particular brand of streamlining, and it came through very

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well, both in its melodramatic and its discursive aspects. Contrary to the usual opinion, it seems to me to be a better play than *Caesar and Cleopatra,* which I have always found self-indulgent, diffuse, and thoroughly dull, an opinion which the recent Broadway production did nothing to change. Lilli Palmers, the chief attraction, was unfortunately absent from her role the night I attended, but Hardwicke's Caesar was disappointing, the production lavish—and dull. On-Stage, one of the most active of the off-Broadway groups, revived *Heartbreak House* and did very well by it on the whole; but their production necessarily lacked that complete polish and finality which Shaw's work, unlike that of greater dramatists, requires if it is to go over.

Of the Strindberg revivals perhaps the less said the better. The Broadway production of *The Father* was shockingly bad; there is no need to go into unpleasant detail. (I missed an earlier production of the same play by another off-Broadway group, but understand that it was considerably better.) On-Stage did somewhat better with *The Creditors,* but in neither case was there adequate grasp of what was going on. If there is anything more to Strindberg than can be found in Fabre's observations on the mating habits of the mantis, better productions than these are required to prove it.

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Ballet, English and American

FRANCIS MASON, JR.

BALLET IS THE ONE theatrical art that is still dominated by a living tradition. Whereas frequent revivals in New York of Shakespeare, Ibsen, and Shaw, of Mozart, Verdi, and Wagner, bear no distinguishable relation to the modern stage, revivals of the classical ballets are directly related to a specific element in contemporary American ballet. In ballet there is no text; there are only dancers before us dancing what a choreographer has arranged to a piece of music. The tradition of European classical ballet, from which most of our ballet has derived, is therefore not as easily reproduced as are the traditions of the opera or the drama, nor has the development of classical ballet, from one country to another, from one choreographer to another, been precisely recorded. But just as it is demanded that there be competent revivals in the opera and the theater, for many years we demanded of the ballet little else. Choreographers who had come from Europe stood by as the American public imposed upon the American dancer its own idealization of the Russian ballerina.

The history of the different reactions to this tendency is visible in a number of ballets in the current repertories of American companies. Loring's *Billy the Kid*, Agnes de Mille's *Rodeo* and *Fall River Legend*, Antony Tudor's *Pillar of Fire*, *Undertow*, and *Nimbus*, Jerome Robbins' *Guests* and *Age of Anxiety*, and lesser works like his *Fancy Free* and *Interplay*—all have behind them the assumption that everyone likes what is familiar. With ballet librettos borrowed from folklore, literature, psychoanalysis, or the newspapers, these choreographers have apparently reduced the distance between their work and its audience. But having secured the interest of the audience informally—not in terms of dance—they have been obliged to sustain it by using dance as an incidental means of formalizing and making theatrical their informal and untheatrical subjects. By substituting pretensions foreign to ballet, these choreographers have compromised both dancing and what they have chosen for their material.

Another element in American ballet to resist the public's nostalgia for the Diaghilev era did so uncompromisingly, without borrowing conventions remote from the dance. Here it was assumed that to introduce such conventions would only make ballet an inadequate substitute for the drama or musical comedy and that to apply them was to abandon the unexploited elements that dance, as an independent art, must naturally contain. The gradual result of this view has been a revival in America of the classical ballet tradition, projected into essentially modern works. Some of the implications of this revival have been clarified by the productions put on here by the Sadler's Wells Ballet; while its

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success is evident in the recent career of the New York City Ballet Company.

The English company brought twelve ballets to New York. Two of these were American premieres, in more or less complete form, of the classical Russian choreography of Marius Petipa and his collaborator, Lev Ivanov, to Tchaikovsky's two great ballet scores, *Swan Lake* and *The Sleeping Beauty*. The three-hour productions of these works (*Swan Lake*, as presented by this company, is in four acts; *The Sleeping Beauty*, in three acts with a prologue) were a distinct novelty to an audience accustomed to a minimum of three ballets a performance. Yet in other, less accidental respects, these Russian ballets did not appear to be novelties at all: each of them told a story, music and dancing conformed to disclose the story on the stage, pantomime cleared up intricacies of plot the dance could not express, intervals of ensemble relieved the tensions created by the principal dancers within the story-framework, and spectacle served to adjust the stage to the imaginative level at which the stories were directed. Compared to the complexities of most modern works that tell stories, this was a simple theatrical pattern, and the effect was simple, too; but here the stories worked to make an illusion for the dancing, not vice versa.

Because the unfolding of its story depends more upon pantomime than upon dancing, *Swan Lake* is a less unified ballet than *The Sleeping Beauty*. The second act, containing its finest choreography, can be seen frequently in performances by American companies. The Sadler's Wells presentation nevertheless gave an intelligibility to the dramatic situation that made the choreography seem finer still. The story in *Swan Lake* is complex and annoying enough to be rejected by the reader; what makes it interesting, what makes the audience care about the fate of its heroine, comes instead from the visible character the ballerina has developed before the spectator by her dancing. Margot Fonteyn, the Sadler's Wells *prima ballerina*, made this development clear: the shift in her style of dancing from the softness and lyricism of the second act to the hard and vicious brilliance of the Black Swan pas de deux was so remarkable that at first the eye could not entertain the notion that this was the same performer. The pathos of the Swan Queen's exit in the second act had not been forgotten when the Black Swan appeared to destroy it with another, for the moment, equally powerful kind of dancing. The classical ballet misses its effect completely if it is not beautifully danced, and the performances of Fonteyn here and in *The Sleeping Beauty* demonstrated the fullest expression of the classic style.

The other ten ballets offered by the Sadler's Wells in New York were representative English ballets done from 1931, the year the company was founded, to 1948. They ranged in ambition from *Job*, a "dance masque" after William Blake, to *Cinderella*, Frederick Ashton's three-act ballet to a score by Prokoviev. *Job*, for the small interest it possessed as dance, was merely a mobile

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tableau; *Cinderella* excelled in pantomime and spectacle, while dance played a secondary role. However, in *A Wedding Bouquet*, set to music by Lord Berners and a text by Gertrude Stein, Ashton's wit at mime was coupled with dance to produce a genuinely comic ballet. The other modern English works were undistinguished. Although Ninette de Valois' *Checkmate* was interesting pictorially, it imposed upon an amusing idea a pretentious allegory about Love and Death. With their inclination toward a facetiousness that barely escapes being vaudeville (Ashton's *Façade* is the English *Fancy Free*) and toward a dance drama burdened with pseudopoetic notions of doom, the Sadler's Wells choreographers have still to learn from the classical ballets in their repertory that choreography seeks neither the trivial nor the maudlin in order to entertain. The fastidious dancing of the company as a whole, and above all the dancing of Margot Fonteyn, make this company a valuable institution; it nevertheless remains that the Sadler's Wells' finest choreographer, Marius Petipa, died in 1910.

Ballet Theatre and the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo present revivals of the classical ballets in New York every year. The success of the American engagement of the Sadler's Wells led the management of the latter company to conclude that the ballet public required more Russian ballet, and in this company's spring season at the Metropolitan Opera House, ten of the ballets presented were revivals of works done before 1925; all but one of these had been created before World War I. A complete version of *The Nutcracker* or *Swan Lake*, both of which the Ballet Russe has presented in short versions for many years, would have been more to the point. Like the Sadler's Wells, but for different reasons, the Ballet Russe has in its repertory few modern ballets of distinction. Where the English company is at least concerned to produce new works every year, the American company is only interested in exploiting a nostalgia for ballets that are, at best, historical curiosities (*Prince Igor, Scheherazade, Les Elfes*, etc.). Although its productions of *Swan Lake, Giselle*, and *Coppelia* have, on occasion, been exemplary, and although its corps de ballet, after 184 performances on tour, was dancing well this spring, the commercially directed Ballet Russe is a static dance organization.

Ballet Theatre has customarily produced splendid versions of the classical ballets and new dance works originating from within the company. This year, these productions were displayed in a shoddy state, and seemed, in the unfortunate Center Theater, shoddier still. The four new ballets the company presented during its tenth anniversary season suggest that the creative excitement that so distinguished the Ballet Theatre some years ago has languished if not expired. The best of the new ballets, Antony Tudor's *Nimbus*, offered the dream of a working girl, Hollywood style. Herbert Ross's *Caprichos*, "after Goya's commentaries to his 'Caprichos' etchings," was remarkable for its consistently offensive bad taste.

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Just as Petipa brought from France to St. Petersburg elements of dance that were to result in the Russian classic ballet, George Balanchine, when he left Europe in 1933, brought with him to New York a knowledge of conventions that combined with his own individual talent to produce a classic style in America. During the past sixteen years, Balanchine has done more than thirty ballets for ballet companies in this country. During the past year, in performances by his own company, by Ballet Theatre, and the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, it has been possible to see fourteen of these ballets. Balanchine's own company is, of course, the New York City Ballet, which, with the School of American Ballet, where almost all of its dancers study, constitutes the closest American equivalent to the Sadler's Wells Company. Because, unlike the Sadler's Wells, it is not supported financially by any public authority, this company has been able to perform less than two months every year, yet in those few weeks it has danced ballets more demanding than those done by any other company, here or in Europe.

All dancing is difficult to describe in words and the Balanchine ballets that have been danced in New York are no exception. His *Serenade* for example is what might be called a purely dramatic ballet. We do not know what the drama is except that it has come from the dancing. The emotion and mood of the ballet arise from gestures and from formalized movements that reflect gesture. It never depends for its effect upon the *a priori* existence of an emotion it is about to state; its emotion lies in the quality of its motion. This ballet, which Balanchine choreographed to Tchaikovsky's *Serenade for Strings* for the American Ballet in 1934, might serve as a convenient bridge between his pure dance ballets like *Symphonie Concertante* (to Mozart's *Symphonie Concertante in E flat* for violin and viola) and *Concerto Barocco* (to Bach's *Concerto in D Minor* for two violins) and a late dramatic work like *Orpheus* (Stravinsky). The formal patterns of the opening movement of *Serenade* contain dance elements that Balanchine was to begin to develop into complete ballets with *Concerto Barocco;* and the dramatic situations evoked by the dancing in *Serenade* are sketches for the complete unification of dance and plot in *Orpheus*.

The ballets that may be called pure dance and the dramatic ballets are both dance entertainments. Balanchine is one choreographer whose work does not spring from the conviction that one must be commercial to entertain, but solemnly "arty" if one is to create a work of art. The specific quality of entertainment in his ballets is determined by the quality of the music he chooses, but in no single work does the chosen music preclude variety in producing a single effect. This is obvious in the longer works like *Symphonie Concertante* and *Concerto Barocco,* where the design of the scores allows for different kinds of dancing, and more obvious still in a work like *Four Temperaments,* for which Hindemith and Balanchine worked out musical and dance themes, set these forth simply at the beginning of the ballet and then

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developed them separately and in combination. Each of these three ballets, like the scores upon which they are based, ends with the fullest extension of the material with which they began; the initial statement has passed through a number of transitions and variations that develop its entire meaning.

As the dancers follow the solo instruments in the Bach and Mozart concertos, it is a mistake to assume that this correspondence is literal, following from measure to measure in strict rhythm, or directly imitative. What the orchestra and soloists play has such support in the relation of individual dancers to the corps de ballet that the two elements of music and dancing are composed to form a unified work. A "symphonic" ballet of Massine's might display a series of interesting spectacles corresponding with certain moments in a score, but the transition from one dance representation to another is accidental, discontinuous; we seem to be looking at a sequence of slides hopelessly emulating a moving picture. With Balanchine's ballets, on the other hand, we have that same composition of music and dance that script and camera achieve in a good movie. This can be seen also in the dance spectacles like *Symphony in C* (Bizet) and *Bourrée Fantasque*. The composition of music and dance attained in *Orpheus*, where Stravinsky's score, by direct musical gesture, develops a plot of its own to accompany the stage action, is Balanchine's demonstration of what such a correspondence can produce dramatically in a ballet with a story. Here program notes are superfluous, and music and dance mutually produce and control the drama of the myth. In the earlier dramatic ballet, *Prodigal Son* (Prokoviev), the choreography controls more than the music and the balance is imperfect.

It is impossible to say of Balanchine, as it is of so many choreographers, that his work proceeds, chronologically, from the simple to the complex. This would perhaps have been the case if his resourcefulness relied upon tradition alone or merely upon the world about him. That it relies upon both is the reason why some of the dancing in his ballets is immediately striking to the casual observer. But the full dance context into which these individual dances are set will be missed if one attends to isolated movements alone. Everybody laughs at the opening movement of *Bourrée Fantasque*, but the discovery that parts of *Four Temperaments* are amusing surprises most audiences. Audiences who do not care for *Apollo* or *Orpheus* are simply too lazy to comprehend choreography they have not been primed by their programs to expect.

Balanchine's new choreography to Stravinsky's *Firebird* is both dance drama and dance spectacle. The part of the Firebird, danced by Maria Tallchief, *prima ballerina* of the New York City company, is a combination of the dramatic and spectacular styles of dancing that other individual dancers and the corps de ballet produce separately in the ballet. As Maria Tallchief dances it, *Firebird* is a modern realization of that form of entertainment epitomized in *Swan Lake* and *The Sleeping Beauty*. Balanchine is now interested in choreographing such a full-length ballet.

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Psychoanalysis in the Creation of Biography[1]

ROBERT M. WENDLINGER

THE DISCUSSION of biography recently initiated in these pages (HUDSON REVIEW, Winter 1950) is an important and suggestive one; surely biography has in the past approached the forms of history, etiquette, and the PMLA rather than the form of art; we must find out why. Still, Stanley Edgar Hyman's persistent demands for psychoanalytic investigation of the *facts* of life (the fact of an author's homosexuality), may lead us again toward the forms of science, not art; toward *scopophilia,* not the making of a symbol. His demands remind one of Harold Nicolson's prophecy, many years ago, of an insatiable "scientific" thirst for fact eventually to destroy the "literary" symbol altogether.

Susanne K. Langer, whose remarkably suggestive aesthetic theory has also been recently outlined on these pages (Winter 1950), suggests that we trust her general principle—that art (including biography) is *the making of a symbol.* If this is so, facts—no matter how strenuously we seek them—can be no more than the raw materials of the symbol: the pigment, brushes, and canvas of painting; the chisel and marble of sculpture. Facts are indispensable in biography, yet they do not yield the principles of artistic sculpture. We must remember, dampening the pursuit of *all* the facts, that all the facts will not insure biography *as art.*

Art is the making of a symbol, but psychoanalytic biography has been directed, we might say *irresistibly,* toward a scientific interest: *the making of a fact* (the making of material). Thus minor facts are discovered, examined, and recombined as they lead toward the main fact—what Poe *was.* At the close of the volume the reader, allowed to pop open the party favor, spreads out the message before him: *Poe was a sado-necrophilist!* This is the end of one biographer's labor; but hardly the end of art, which is to communicate the life and logic of feeling.

Yet the suspicion lurks in our minds, hard to throw off, and harder to use,

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[1]THE WRITER AND PSYCHOANALYSIS, by *Edmund Bergler,* M.D. Doubleday. $3.50; THE PSYCHOANALYST AND THE ARTIST, by *Daniel E. Schneider,* M.D. Farrar, Straus. $4.00; THE DEMON LOVER, by *Arthur Wormhoudt.* Exposition. $3.50; THE LIFE AND WORKS OF EDGAR ALLAN POE, by *Marie Bonaparte,* M.D. Imago (London). $8.00; MR. CARLYLE—MY PATIENT, by *James L. Halliday,* M.D. Grune & Stratton. $3.50.

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that psychoanalysis is somehow relevant to artistic creation. Some have tried, but none succeeded, in reconciling the fact-gathering process of psychoanalysis to the demands of an art-form. When he concluded that "We have . . . traced Poe's art to an abnormal condition of the nerves," Joseph Wood Krutch issued an admission of defeat, confessed that his life of Poe was neither fish nor fowl, neither good art nor good science.

But is this antagonism real or imaginary? Must the symbolizing techniques of art and the fact-gathering techniques of psychoanalysis be forever locked in a death struggle, in different logical orders; or are they in a subtle sense compatible? To this question, five new books, favorable to the psychoanalytic point of view, offer very different answers.

Almost unconsciously, psychoanalysts drift into opposing camps over the nature of analytic fact; the distinction, important for art, can be seen most clearly in the attitudes of Drs. Edmund Bergler and Daniel Schneider toward the Oedipus complex.

Dr. Bergler, author of *The Writer and Psychoanalysis,* regards the Oedipus complex as a simple, discursive, propositional fact, stripped of its mythic content. Read: Hamlet (or John Doe) wants to kill his father and marry his mother, without overtones and without connotations. In order to get at the Oedipal fact of the case, our energies must be directed toward the past, which is its *lair* or *cave.* Thus Dr. Bergler must pursue the course of a bloodhound: seeing, hearing, *appreciating* the present, only insofar as it leads to the past.

Dr. Bergler, however, is disturbed by the *complexity* of the Oedipus complex, which often acts less like a propositional fact than a mythic symbol, containing unmanageable overtones of feeling toward mother, father, culture, religion, and literature. A more precise, *denuded* fact—perhaps further back in psychic development—would explain more simply the psychological relations of mankind, and their consequences. This fact is what Dr. Bergler proposes as the "basic neurosis" or psychic masochism.

This new fact, beyond Oedipus, replacing *complex* with *base,* makes possible several simplifications of method. Patriarchal overtones are eliminated (the "basic neurosis" occurs before the child is conscious of the father); matriarchal overtones (Momism) are eliminated ("Reality may emphasize a neurosis but never create one"). And environmental overtones are eliminated—the "basic neurosis" is caused by an irresistible biological urge. The neurotic victim, stripped of semblance and personality, has been prepared for the operation into his past—under these conditions, how could Dr. Bergler overlook anything?

He finds *all* writers to be basic neurotics, fixated in the oral state of psychic development, suffering from a megalomanic wish to get pleasure from displeasure. Thus literature is not symptomatic of an *aggressive* Oedipal wish

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(as Ernest Jones and others have stated), but only of another defense against the real wish—to be passive and masochistic before the mother-image. Dr. Bergler's clinical work with thirty-six writers having forced his conclusion, he suggests that proper symbolic analysis of attitudes toward women in literature will substantiate his theory, and also reveal the forms that defenses assume, e.g., Balzac's *Peau de Chagrin* is really a story of "masturbation."

If Dr. Bergler is Scientist as Fact-Gatherer, Dr. Schneider, author of *The Psychoanalyst and the Artist,* is Scientist as *Artist.* (Under the name of Daniel Taylor, he has written *They Move With the Sun,* a novel which, it might be noted, obliges Dr. Bergler's accusation of oral neurosis.)

As it was to Freud, the Oedipus *complex* is to Schneider a magnificent mythic intuition, capable of gradually yielding sound scientific concepts, the beginning and not the end of knowledge. It is the present as well as the past. "The worst injustice . . . in some esthetic and reactionary 'psychologic' quarters . . . is that (the Oedipus complex) is generally conceived of as an 'encapsulated' tumor deep in the psyche which needs to be extracted as though it were a hidden, recalcitrant golf ball. . . ." And Schneider almost sings about the inexhaustible "power and beauty" of his "art-science":

> The permutations of the Oedipus complex in sheer numerical possibilities of character and situation are endless, the subtleties overwhelming in their variation. The Oedipus complex makes the "psychic fingerprint" . . . (for) the human child . . . from the moment of conception, (is) the recapitulation of the past as well as the promise of the future. . . . Everything pours into the crucible of the Oedipus complex—imagination, society, tradition, physical health, a father's glance, a mother's song, a brother's or sister's resentment or love, the way a street looks and what happens on that street, the echo or presence of war, pain, pleasure, the cost of things and the multitude of the forces we call education. . . .

It is obvious, as we turn to the artistic views of Bergler and Schneider, and to their consequences in biography, that psychoanalysis is relevant to art as the eye is focused on the complex or the fact. The Oedipal fact means nothing to art, and probably nothing to science; it is significant to those who spend their lives justifying the ways of Freud to men, and fail, never having understood Him at all.

If Dr. Bergler has been seduced by fact, he has been left untouched by logic. Writers are confused with writing, motive confused with meaning. More accurately, he sees no distinction between two kinds of meaning: scientific and artistic.

Since art is motivated by an infantile wish for passivity and masochism, we must beware of critics who falsely draw a portrait of art as the bearer of culture, human dignity, or the "classical tradition." For, Bergler says,

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"the writer expresses, exclusively, secondary defenses against unconscious wishes." He does not "express reality as it is"; what he expresses (he does not *represent* anything) is Deceit, in the shape of Form and Ideas. Plato, his ladder to perfection turned upside down, with animals riding high, can only answer: "As there are misanthropists or haters of men, so also are there misologists or haters of ideas."

Really, the artist is an infant; "human dignity" means an attempt to deny reality and assert the megalomanic wish; and every illustration of the classical tradition, say Milton's debt to Dante, or Dante's to Virgil, will fall into one of *twenty-four* categories of plagiarism. For the benefit of literary critics these categories are herein listed:

> A. PLAGIARISMS WITH PARTICIPATION OF CONSCIOUSNESS. 1. Cynical plagiarism; 2. Pl. defended by preliminary attack against its victim (preventive pl.); 3. Unmasking of provocative pl.; 4. Pl. put over by virtue of speed; 5. Authoritative pl.; 6. Pl. in which citation is implied; 7. Inimical pl.; 8. Beachcomber pl.; 9. Pl. with mental reservation (on the borderline between conscious and unconscious pl.).
>
> B. PLAGIARISMS WITHOUT PARTICIPATION OF CONSCIOUSNESS. 10. Thwarted or self-detected pl.; 11. Pl. based on the same etiological claim as the original; 12. Pl. caused by "borrowed" sense of guilt; 13. Pl. to permit dissolution of an object relation; 14. Pl. as a means of overcoming fear; 15. Pl. of the *captatio benevolentiae* type; 16. Pl. because of necessity to lean upon a model; 17. Pl. as a substitute for a "cover memory"; 18. Pl. of people in love; 19. Pl. in love that is close to hatred due to ambivalence; 20. Pl. of the aging; 21. Pl. through fear of one's audacity; 22. The eclectic; 23. The quotation specialist commits pl. in its negative form (indirect pl.); 24. The pl. hunter (also indirect).

These meanings of art will be kept before our eyes if we install a new set of psychological-formal-aesthetic critics who can perceive the *true* scientific facts. The formal-aesthetic quality of the critic need have no special insight into *artistic* meaning, however, but must merely be familiar with the *material* of literature; the meaning he searches for, underneath the superficial layers of ideas and forms ("wrappings"), is Dr. Bergler's meaning. No other meaning is conceivable, and T. S. Eliot is spanked for daring to use "depersonalization" in a literary sense: ". . . if he had acquainted himself with psychiatric terms, he would have found . . . the *accepted* meaning of the word."

But the sacrificial slaughter of art before a vision of the Omnipotent Fact is not science either. Nearly every generalization is eventually qualified—with *probably, usually, sometimes, average,* etc. In fact, Bergler's style seems entirely inappropriative for science, peppered as it is with *witty* friends and *naïve* enemies, and mainly directed (anticipating objections?) at the demolition of

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the generic literary critic, "usually . . . an inhibited writer filled . . . with undigested anger against the less inhibited of his confreres in the writing profession. . . . (His) unproductivity . . . results in a predilection for mediocrity, because mediocrity is, unconsciously, more easily forgiven by the sterile than is genuine talent."

Undoubtedly the literary critic may now be accused of "resistance" to psychological truth; but other analysts "resist" Dr. Bergler also. Several answers are suggested to this book, a product of twenty years of concentration and thought: (1) truth assumes different forms; (2) truth will not surrender unconditionally to one man; (3) a hammer will not turn a screw; (4) megalomania is not restricted to writers.

If this "biography" of the universal writer is what you want as *material*—and there *is* truth in these ideas, and much latent tragedy—Arthur Wormhoudt has offered a clinical method of symbolic analysis which follows Dr. Bergler's theory. *The Demon Lover,* subtitled "A Psychoanalytic Approach to Literature" (and really the reverse), finds psychic masochism in *Don Juan, Prometheus Unbound, The Eve of St. Agnes, Tintern Abbey,* and *Christabel.* The biographer (and critic) might well prefer to treat the imagery of *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* as an "expression of the masochistic attachment to the denying mother-image in which the infant tries to put the blame on the mother for starving him" (the denying mother is the sedge withered from the dried-up lake, the bird breast which no longer gives up song, the squirrel which has taken all the nuts—castration, the harvest which robs the earth of its fruitfulness, etc.), rather than agree that "it stands above the reach of criticism." However, this material is *per se* without value for biography or criticism, unless it is *absorbed* into the author's "intuition" of his subject, or into his artistic form. This serious, cheerless book, although occasionally hinting at dramatic shifts in psychic defenses, finally serves to strip the poems of their meaning and the poets of their lives. Directed toward the psyche of a child-animal without character or cosmos, a psychological theory tragic enough in its implications is never absorbed into the texture of actual, immediate experience—experience *as it is lived.* The facts of passivity and masochism (true as they may be) do not reveal the drama, peculiar and individual, in the lives of Shelley, Keats, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Byron.

Wrestling with the problem of *absorption,* consciously or not, are all psychoanalytic biographers. Marie Bonaparte (*The Life and Works of Edgar Allan Poe*), and James L. Halliday (*Mr. Carlyle—My Patient*) try different solutions to the problem.

The study of Poe, by a distinguished French psychoanalyst and pupil of Freud, was published in 1933 but translated into English only last year. Seven hundred pages long, with three mammoth indexes (including ten pages of psy-

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choanalytic categories), and based on the complete Poe material, this book is nevertheless valuable only for students of psychology.

Princess Bonaparte's efforts to inosculate past and present, in the drama of Poe's life, are pedestrian and unimaginative. Of a couplet in *Ulalume* ("Here once, through an alley Titanic/ Of Cypress, I roamed with my soul . . .") she writes: "Indeed, it was through a cypress alley that Poe had followed Virginia's corpse to the grave," and later, "that day . . . was . . . an anniversary of the most significant event in his life; that long past day in December when his mother was taken away." Still her awareness of the continuity of the Oedipus complex is not imagined with Poe's mind, and these statements about cypress alleys do not represent ideas of feeling, but evoke only a vision of the fact to come—the fact of sado-necrophilia.

Princess Bonaparte is serious about biography, and in 1939 published her credo in the *International Journal of Psycho-analysis*: "For those who understand—and they are the only people who count—biography, reaching beyond the uncomprehending thousands, becomes a means of communing with a wider humanity. . . ." Here, in what one might mistake for a Left-Bank defense of *Finnegans Wake,* she attempts to justify the lack-luster of psychoanalytic biography. Whether Princess Bonaparte was conscious of her own difficulties with Poe, one cannot say. But unwilling or unable to absorb the facts she finds into artistic logic, to *imagine* the life of feeling, she divides the book into two sections—the first dealing with the Life and Poems, the second with Tales of the Mother and Tales of the Father—a scientific device which relieves the imagination of work.

Thus the style is either an amateur's:

> Edgar Poe was born at Boston on January 19th, 1809, both parents being actors. David Poe, his father, was the son of "General" David Poe of Baltimore, Assistant Deputy-Quartermaster, in 1778, of the Continental forces, who had been brought to America as a child, his parents being Scotch Protestants established in Ireland. . . ."

Or a scientist's:

> Here we touch on a biological problem of some difficulty, especially after the lapse of more than a century. What form did Poe's impotence take? Was it a psychic impotence that made the sex act impossible, owing to the dangers the approach to women implied—— although erection might occur when he was away from them—or did erectility vanish at an early age?

Or (at its best), this (??):

> Thus, this tale, in manifest content a kind of burlesque, reveals its latent content on analysis, as profoundly tragic. Not without reason does Poe's humor here appear . . . wearing a gruesome grin. Force himself as he may to ridicule or depreciate the envied potency of the

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> father, by showing him choked by his double breath, or manipulating Mr. Lacko'breath like a puppet, these antics are still funereal and there is something sinister in his sarcasm. Force himself to laugh as he may, to keep back the tears, Poe's laughter is never wholehearted. For, to the impotent, loss of potency is no laughing matter.

There is here no primary illusion, nothing to bind the work together, and keep it from slipping into actuality. When Princess Bonaparte repeats her insights, as she does often, it is to convince us of fact, not feeling. And there is no resolution here of her demand to other biographers for "the thoughts in their minds and . . . the feelings in their once beating hearts."

On the other hand, Dr. Halliday, a British psychoanalyst, believes with Schneider that Oedipus can give a fact to the imagination. His biography is largely successful because he follows a simple but excellent fictional device. "How," he asks, "would a twentieth-century physician, a specialist in psychosomatic medicine, diagnose Thomas Carlyle's famous stomach ache?" This question suggests that the perfect form for a biography of Carlyle is a *humorous* one achieved through contrast. Modern medical opinion of Carlyle is contrasted with a nineteenth-century view which declared: "The wretched dyspepsia to which he was subject was fully accounted for by the fact that he was particularly fond of a very nasty gingerbread. The only remedy I could ever get him to take was grey powder, and it did him much good."

And Dr. Halliday, who is a witty Englishman, very reasonably imagines conflict between himself and Carlyle. Halliday invents a medical record card of Carlyle's case, and under "General Impression": " . . . he seemed to imply that doctors were not of much use. One of his brothers is a doctor." Under another classification is a psychiatric trade-joke: "Patient failed to appear on time."

It is also obvious that the prose of Carlyle or Dr. Quain, so formal and positive and aggressive, and yet to us so wrong, will take a splendid tumble in this civilized medical atmosphere. A letter from Carlyle to his brother is invested with a different feeling as we become convinced of his urgent attempts to create the impression of a terrific phallic-father figure: "I have got a most notable broad-brimmed hat, a great comfort to me; and this not by the brim alone, I find, but also by the size, which lets in the air about me and prevents the intrusion of headache. . . . Jane shrieked, almost wept, when she first saw me in it. However, I persisted resolute against headache. . . . There is not such another beaver within the four Ports of London."

Halliday's graceful and distinguished style will bear pathos as well as pathology, and pathos is appropriate for Carlyle. With a fine touch Dr. Halliday *imagines* the feeling of scopophilia and (in this instance) masochism in his subject, never letting his mind wander from the underlying "truth."

> In a sense Tom really asked for what he got. His passive and superior attitudes attracted the boys, even seduced them, to "know" him. It was

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> as if he was inviting his suffering in a masochistic way. So continually: "They flouted me, they beat me, they jeered and tweaked and tortured me by a thousand cunning arts. I could only answer with my tears." And when they attacked and held him he would keep crying, as perhaps he had cried out to his father and earlier still to his mother: "Let me alone. Let me alone. It's not fair. I never wanted to hurt anybody. I wanted only to do good. Let me alone." . . . On one occasion at least Tom's defense of pacifism broke down, but instead of assaulting his tormentor directly he ran after him stealthily and hit him a terrific blow on the back of the head with a metalled boot—which is one method of returning "stroke for stroke." The sight of his assailant sprawling in a mass of mud and water filled Tom, as he put it, with a "holy happiness"—a term which recalls his sadistic thrills that were so "like heaven." Yet, as is commonly found in persons who have strong obsessional trends and undue sadistic tendencies Carlyle really believed himself to have been an inoffensie kindly being: "A quiet inoffensive creature that loved all things."

This is nice writing, but Dr. Halliday cannot maintain his pace. He is working at cross-purposes: creating an excellent biography, and explaining psychosomatic medicine to the popular reader. Various medical explanations must be scattered throughout the book, including a four-hundred-word footnote on Carlyle's bowel dysfunction. Thus the primary illusion is often shattered, and we slip back into actuality. And a serious question remains to be answered. If the primary illusion had not been lost, would Halliday have been a good artist only, and not *significantly* abetted by his analytic knowledge? His keen sense of psychological justice would seem to be an advantage; but can psychoanalysis significantly develop his imagination, or anyone's; can it go beyond the buried life to creativity?

Daniel Schneider (to return to him) would say yes, for true equality and co-operation is possible between creative scientists and creative artists. Both are "capable of . . . the capture of . . . the higher integrations of motion. . . . An artist is intuitively a scientist of psychic tension—of the very economies of psychic energy which fascinate the analyst."

He suggests abandonment of what Susanne K. Langer has called the "search for disguises" and instead will "try to show that psychoanalysis promises to be more powerful in the aid it can give to the problems of *form* than it has been in its more obvious and less subtle handlings of the symbolism of art content." He is not proposing a distinction between "form" and "symbol," but an analysis of the entire form-content structure, as opposed to the factual, personal, or clinical analysis of art which has interested Bergler, Bonaparte, Wormhoudt, and almost every analyst to write about art (Theodore Reik excepted).

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Psychoanalysis will redirect psychic energy toward the exercise of inborn talent; the talent is *inborn,* but will be strengthened, as both artist and analyst study "motion" as it is presented in the dream. Art is "dream turned inside out" and "dream made conscious"—Dr. Schneider is fully aware of our objections, but proposes to turn them aside; dream-art had been examined for *purpose;* it should now be examined for *structure.* The principles of psychic economy — condensation, displacement, substitution — exist in dream-art; a complete study of the dream-world, using *analytic* terms, and concepts—psychic economy, psychic energy, etc., will improve our artistic technique. (We have meant to do this all along, but the *purpose* of art has cried for our attention.) Why cannot the terminology of psychoanalysis then be applied to both art and analysis, and why cannot psychoanalysis make a *formal* contribution to aesthetics? Thus: "the clue to form . . . is the knowledge of all the implications of identification . . ."

It is to justify this principle that he analyzes, incompletely but suggestively—paintings by Chagall, Picasso, and Van Gogh; Sophocles' Oedipus plays, *Macbeth, All My Sons,* and *Death of a Salesman.* And it is here that his primary weakness is exposed: Dr. Schneider's terminology is not very useful to aesthetic theory. Analytic terms apply best to the forms of drama (with the greatest amount of "transference-conflict," identification, etc.), less well to painting (and not to abstraction at all), less to architecture (described only as "mood"), dance, poetry, sculpture, and music (the "cathartic" theory again, with its logical difficulties). This is not to say that Schneider's book is not engagingly modest, sensitive, and a good one: he comes closer to the meanings of art than any analyst before him, and it is easy to agree with much of what he writes; but we agree with many things that cannot be fruitfully discussed.

Thus psychoanalysis has taken us on a grand tour, from the too-discursive fact of Bergler to the too-nondiscursive perception of "Oedipal motion" which is Dr. Schneider's contribution. Dr. Schneider is perhaps right: something which we call "Oedipal motion" may be at the bottom of art. But do we have discursive tools through which to articulate this perception? The analytic terms on which Schneider rests his case are figurative constructions themselves. What is psychic energy? And what is psychic economy? What help is it to argue that "changes in psychic economy have a relationship to changes in physical motion"?

And what, by the way, *is* motion? (Dr. Schneider distinguishes between intuition-cognition, connotation-denotation, and motion-emotion, in a manner to strike fear into the hearts of philosophers.) What can psychoanalysis contribute, in its present state of semantic imprecision, toward logical terms that will distinguish the motion of music from the motion of a train, and the motion of a movie?

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I think we are left, finally, with psychoanalytic value to art as perception or intuition; which does not mean that value is not there; and that analysis may not corroborate it; but how is it to be expressed? What criticism and aesthetics need is a logical terminology for all art, and for particular arts. For such a terminology, I recommend Mrs. Langer's work.

At any rate, if biography is not to be a vague instance of the "commemorative instinct," the usual mixture of history, prejudice, and psychoanalysis must be abandoned for a guiding principle of art: the creation of a primary illusion of virtual history, removed from actuality, and a secondary illusion of character.

If the biographer follows this proposition, he may ignore the false caution of those implication-hunters and footnote-scouts who are ready to level the charge of "no factual evidence." Such caution is the product of scientific and not artistic "truth." In 1928, André Maurois felt that no biographer could match Tolstoy's fictionalized and freely imagined Napoleon—"No document would have enabled him to show Napoleon stretching out his small chubby hand or casting a glance at the Tsar, unless it had happened that some eye-witnesses had made a note of such attitudes and gestures for him"—but Maurois' sense of the possible in art has since clashed with his theory. For art can do anything, as Mrs. Langer has said, except *break into actuality.*

What is created in biography is a novel of character; it will be coherent as art only when the author's intuition squares with the facts at hand. But we must not refuse to imagine Poe's last week at West Point because no documents exist; such a scene, if correctly intuited, will be coherent within the artistic structure. The life of a man, *as it is experienced*, is available to the imagination; and it does not matter that we cannot prove it empirically. For this knowledge of a man's life is not available in any form but art, and cannot be judged by any standards but artistic ones. Most critics seek the wrong things in biography, as many seek Marx in drama, and are disappointed to find only Shakespeare.

Thus we must study the techniques and forms of biography—biography that wins, and biography that loses. How are facts imagined? What are possible styles for biography? To what extent can a biography be fictionalized? To what extent is a biography a novel? How many facts, under what conditions, are necessary for belief? When may the author intrude his personality, and when not? Even the disposal of footnotes is relevant to the primary illusion: what shall be their position in the text, under what circumstances? Until we begin to answer these basic questions, critics will be of little help to biographers or to their unfortunate subjects—who will surely say, as Thackeray did upon reading a biography by his daughter: "Let there be none of this when I am gone."

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Lionel Trilling and the New Stoicism

R. W. B. LEWIS

THE LIBERAL IMAGINATION, by *Lionel Trilling*. Viking. $3.50.

THE WORDS we encounter most frequently in the essays of Lionel Trilling are: flexibility, variety, difficulty, possibility, modulation. They are the marks of Mr. Trilling's mind, which is capable at once of more range and more exactness than almost any other critic in America today; they are also, one may say, the burden of his song. For variety and complexity are Mr. Trilling's defining terms for a liberal society in good political health, and the sense of them is an earnest of the liberal imagination in good working order. In his disciplined inspection of literature, old and new, we find Mr. Trilling irresistibly drawn toward any writing in which tensions serve to expand the world. He admires those minds (James, for example, and Mark Twain) who have "contained both the yes and the no of their culture"; he prizes the ability, which Scott Fitzgerald found in himself, "to hold two opposed ideas in the mind at the same time"; he believes the most valuable insights of our time to have been made by men who, like Freud, have offered "a view which does not narrow and simplify the human world for the artist, but on the contrary opens and complicates it." These are the judgments, drawn at random from this volume, of a man working with industry and much patient skill in the main tradition of humanism: a word very nearly synonymous with "the liberal imagination"; and we are not surprised to find him pursing his lips a little over T. S. Eliot and his incorrigible employment of the "spirited phrase" (i.e., the unmodulated opinion). Mr. Trilling, whose style is rarely over-spirited, gravitates more willingly toward an earlier writer like Montaigne, who genially upset an entire system of thought by his rambling insistence upon the "dissemblable," and who was pleased by the man from Delphos because he could even tell one egg from another.

But it is not, primarily, the scholastic proponents of eggness, of the one, the simple and the same, whom Mr. Trilling studies to correct. In his adverse reports, he is concerned rather with the contemporary poets and novelists, psychologists and critics and social statisticians who have looked at our experience and have seen too little of it: who have managed to reduce experience, to make it thinner and narrower than it is or needs to be—who have impoverished it, in their account. Oversimplification is the theme of a number of essays. The sin of reduction is charged with some regret against those stories of Sherwood Anderson in which there is virtually "no social experience at all."

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The quite different enterprise of the authors of the Kinsey Report is, in a quiet but devastating review, found lacking in the awareness of "any idea that is in the least complex." Even Freud nods, Mr. Trilling maintains, when he restricts the effect of a play like *Hamlet* to a single source and mode: an unnecessary, schematic contraction of the mystery of dramatic experience. And in the literary history of Vernon Parrington and the novels of Theodore Dreiser, Mr. Trilling detects an inadequacy of perception, of a sort unhappily common with the liberal mind—an assumption about "reality" which delimits the real by excluding from it the mental, the moral, the shadowy, the ambiguous.

A right perception of reality is a major aim of these essays, and no doubt the unifying terms I have mentioned help define both the quality of perception and the nature of the thing perceived. I am not sure I can say anything very enlightening about Mr. Trilling's own idea of reality, he conceals it so gracefully. It evidently touches mind as well as matter, morality as well as economy; it is seemingly large, it contains multitudes, it contradicts itself. It resists formulation. But if the content of the real is richly obscure (and I seriously suspect that this is almost a doctrinaire richness, and that the tendency to hide is in the nature of the idea and is involved with its definitive refusal to be defined), still, the locus or habitat can be uncovered. Reality, whatever its character, has to do with society; it is to be looked for amidst the actions and interactions of men, and there only; it must be talked about, if at all, in terms of the felt motion of social organizations toward certain ends. The social, properly understood, *is* the real; and to the real, consequently, the ambiguous and the conceptual must be admitted, for they are undeniable factors in the motivation of men. In saying so, I do not imagine that I am doing anything more than repeating that Mr. Trilling is a humanist; for what identifies the humanist in any age is the habit of subsuming metaphysics under politics—of translating questions about reality into the study of moral and political tendencies. Mr. Trilling is almost conventionally humanistic, as well, in his feeling for history ("Tacitus," "The Sense of the Past") and in his affection for rhetoric and his suspicion of logic: for rhetoric can move men to worthy actions, while logic works dryly and inhumanly with the essences and attributes of things.

It is misleading and perhaps unfair to fix Mr. Trilling's critical position in terms of this kind, especially when he is so ready to avoid fixity himself and to remind us constantly of variety and possibility. But the identification may be useful, as I follow Mr. Trilling along one of the lines of argument dictated by the humanist conviction. His idea of reality leads him to pose the critical question most often at the point of intersection between literature and society. He urges critic and poet alike to center their attention there. "I should instruct the creative artist to look long at the pattern of life and customs, and thence to draw living expressions." I am borrowing the phrase from Horace, but it is

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suitable enough, for Mr. Trilling is a good deal like Roman Horace (and unlike Greek Aristotle) in his method—a method which, needless to say, involves him with the novel, the narrative portrait of society, rather than the lyric. Looking long at the pattern of life and customs in our time, Mr. Trilling wonders, with V. S. Pritchett, whether it continues to provide the novelist with adequate material; life, he suspects, is deficient in custom and therefore, possibly, lacking in pattern. The case, which is very cogently argued in two essays, "Manners, Morals and the Novel" and "Art and Fortune," cannot be fully rehearsed here; Mr. Trilling is nothing if not complex. But it turns on two propositions: first, that the disappearance of recognizable classes in society has effected a diminution of those "manners" which the novelist must depend upon; second, and more fundamental, that a general failure of will before the convulsive spectacle of human depravity has robbed the novelist of subject—which is nothing less than the will in act—and even of power to cope with such subject as remains. A part of this contention, at any rate, is a pretty old story in America, as Mr. Trilling knows: it was made by Cooper, E. T. Channing, and others even before Hawthorne and James, and the great novels of the mid-century may have confirmed rather than refuted it, in their motion away from "actual" society toward an earlier or a more fantastic dramatic setting.

But Mr. Trilling, who is a novelist himself, concludes with what looks like a paradox. For if the age has let the novelist down, the novelist is nonetheless one of our major hopes, and is enjoined to "do something in the work of reconstituting and renovating the will." It should be said at once that Mr. Trilling does not make the writer solely responsible for our redemption; the task is to be shared by the statesman and the man of social conscience, and the writer will be happier, Mr. Trilling indicates, so soon as he can be relieved of duty. But for the duration, he had better address himself to the business of strengthening the ideas of liberal democracy (variety, flexibility, etc.)—to invest his writing with them, and so to help give them renewed vitality in the society which his writing reflects. There is a trace of Philip Sidney here; there is more than a trace of Matthew Arnold, about whom Mr. Trilling has written an extended study and an editorial introduction. Mr. Trilling shares the "humanistic valuation," which he has attributed to Arnold, "of discourse and letters." Like Arnold (and unlike the more limited and professorial humanists of the twenties), Mr. Trilling appears to cherish a very lofty opinion of the power of literature in the regeneration of society; against, perhaps, the pretensions of science. Clearly, at least, he dissociates himself from yet another familiar suggestion:

> Since liberal democracy inevitably generates a body of ideas, it must necessarily occur to us to ask why it is that these particular ideas have not infused with force and cogency the literature that embodies them. This question is the most important, the most fully challenging in culture that at the moment we can ask.

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> The answer to it cannot of course even be begun here. . . . But there are one or two things that may be said about the answer, about the direction we must take to reach it in its proper form. We will not find it if we come to facile conclusions about the absence from our culture of the impressive ideas of traditional religion. I have myself referred to the historical fact that religion has been an effective means of transmitting or of generating ideas of a sort which I feel are necessary for the literary qualities we want, and to some this will no doubt mean that I believe religion to be a necessary condition of great literature. I do not believe that; and what is more, I consider it from many points of view an impropriety to try to guarantee literature by religious belief.

The passage deserves a very careful gloss: something which could study in detail the decline from the sharpness and luminosity of the question as stated in the first paragraph to the plethora of modifications, undercuttings, and protective adjectives of the second; which might end by listing the fascinating ambiguities in the operative word, "impropriety," in the final sentence. It may at least be noted that the pressure of words and phrases like "absence from our culture," "impressive," "traditional," "historical fact," "effective means of transmitting," "feel are necessary for the literary qualities"—that this pressure is such as to reverse proper relationships and identify opposites. But I rather think that what the passage reveals in particular is a characteristic contemporary restlessness before, as they are distressingly called, "absolute values." Both the language and the texture of the thought indicate the way in which affirmation or rejection inevitably appears to anyone who sincerely wishes to contain simultaneously in his mind the yes and the no of his culture.

This unease is a part of what has sometimes been called "the new liberalism": which is a commitment, as a colleague of Mr. Trilling has said, "to the tensions and harmonies within extremes," rather than to the extremes themselves. We will have trouble with titles here, since just about the same commitment has recently taken on the name of "the new conservatism," as right and left, retreatingly warily, back into each other at the center. It is interesting to observe that Lionel Trilling, who doubts that there is a conservative tradition in America, feels so strongly the need for an enlightened opposition that he is impelled occasionally to enact that role himself. He is short with Rudyard Kipling for being a bumbling, rather than an effective conservative. I hope it is not thought that I take lightly either the issue or the resolution of it by men as gifted as Mr. Trilling, when I suggest, as a more useful description of the centrist position, that it be called a new Stoicism.

Humanism always takes on the guise appropriate to the time: Cicero, John of Salisbury, Montaigne, and John Stuart Mill are differently clothed. But contrary to the usual definition, humanism is not exclusively, I doubt that it is regularly, optimistic and affirmative by nature. It is often characterized by a note of noble sadness, as its peculiar angle of vision picks up the apparently hopeless contrariety of human life. Finding it impossible to justify either

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assertion or denial, the humanist has frequently withdrawn to a doctrine of sustained tensions; and the courage, sometimes called the duty, to endure, in the midst of interminable and irresolvable polarities, tends to become the chief human virtue. This is a hint of what I mean by Stoicism. And in a period when political and social tensions, literally cosmic in stature, are simply the inescapable facts of life, the Stoic way of meeting experience can become almost irresistibly compelling.

It is not to belittle the contemporary attitude of the new liberals and conservatives to say that they are Stoics. Mr. Trilling's intellectual heroes, Arnold and Mill, both regarded the poet of Stoicism, Marcus Aurelius, as one of the sublime figures in history; and rightly so. But at the same time, I think it fair to say this much: that contemporary Stoicism, in its various forms, is not a program for creative action, but a device for shoring up defenses. It is a plan for holding one's own. It cannot conclude in what Mr. Trilling looks for, the renovation of the will for the benefit of art and life, though it may succeed in piling up enough sandbags for the will to endure a little longer. Stoicism is dedicated largely to containing the enemy, in the cold war it believes to be always with us.

Mr. Lionel Trilling is not the only, but he may be the most eloquent spokesman for the doctrine of sustained tensions. Kenneth Burke comes to something of the same position when he advocates, as in *Attitudes to History*, a "comic vocabulary" which transcends acceptance or rejection. The attitude to history I am trying to describe is in fact the one which has attracted the most distinguished support in our generation. It is neither blind nor narrow nor lacking in many varieties of courage. But the impulse behind it has managed to bisect the field of conflict and agreement—which results both in distortion and discouragement. I suspect that what we lack in our society is not so much classes and manners as a ritual investment of daily and critical behavior whereby we announce our awareness of the relationship between the human and the more than human: the theme of the greatest literature at all times. And I suspect that what we are apt to get from the Stoic reinforcement of the will is a heightening of tragic pity, the sense of identity with the human sufferer; but a lowering of tragic terror, the acknowledgment of the secret cause.

W. C. Fields

WALLACE MARKFIELD

W. C. FIELDS: HIS FOLLIES AND FORTUNES, by *Robert Lewis Taylor.* Doubleday. $3.50.

WHAT IS SINGULAR about W. C. Fields as a personality is that he was perhaps the only comic artist who permitted himself to become more hateful

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than the object he intended to satirize. A pitiless operative, he moved portentously among his victims, taking as his quarry their meanest, most flagrant and anonymous points. Yet, no matter how repulsive the doctors and bank examiners are made, the very excess of their sufferings arouses in us a peculiar sympathy, for they are rendered completely helpless by the macabre conditions which Fields has devised for them. The idea seems to be that there is little point in casting virtue before the infamy of out-and-out scoundrels; they must be mastered by overwhelming force, or, since this is generally unavailable to Fields, by elaborate schemes and cruel strategies. He saw himself as perhaps the single honest man in a world whose apparent purpose was to cheat him. To one committed to this principle there was little point in sentimentality; whatever jarred his sympathies was a thing to be damned, whatever disturbed his physical or mental comfort was a subject for profanity.

It is doubtful whether Fields, if he were still with us, would be permitted to work in the films today. Even during one of his last radio appearances, in an apparently harmless exchange with Charlie McCarthy, the studio audience seemed to sense that his venom, no matter how muffled by an alcoholic haze, was directed at something beyond the little ventriloquist's dummy. Like the unfortunate men who were forced to deal with him in his last years, they could see little reason for his bitterness, and the conclusion of some of his most pungent and overwhelmingly complex insults was met by them with almost absolute silence.

It is unfortunate that Robert Lewis Taylor has chosen merely to write fairly funny prose about a very funny man. But if his study is inadequate, it serves at least to demonstrate that American critics might profitably concern themselves with the rich areas that lie hidden beneath the underbelly of our culture. For the *New Yorker* Profile treatment leaves little room for examining the agonizing frustration which was manifested not only in such an instance as I have mentioned, but throughout all of Fields's life, and certainly, his humor. All we can perceive is the embarrassed cough behind the hand as we read the amused, faintly shocked, nevertheless tolerant accounting of insults, personal feuds, drunken forays and neurotic machinations to avoid being cheated.

Mr. Taylor displays great restraint toward his principal, which prevents him perhaps from discussing such matters as the almost fantastic hatreds which colored Fields's personality. These included not only mother-in-laws, wives, children in varied assortment of age and size, but Negroes, Indians, and Chinese. A certain cruelty was apparent in his treatment of "straight men," those whom he used as the butt of his most vicious humor—and it was basically vicious. All of his intelligence and energy was devoted to their constant outrage. There is for example the scene in *The Bank Dick,* where Fields, assuming his well-known postures of boredom, cynicism, and downright

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rudeness watches a line of depositors standing before a teller's window. He is suddenly confronted by a grotesque-faced Negro, whose ecstatic, minstrel-man expression discloses an array of enormous, jagged teeth; startled, Fields registers only profound disgust. So direct a close-up does the camera render that there is little question of what we are meant to laugh at. In the same film there is a scene in a doctor's office, where a tall, cadaverous patient stands in a fixed, near-catatonic state, the camera dwelling lovingly over the pitiful outline of skeletal structure. Mr. Taylor never really attempts to explore this aspect of Fields's humor, nor relate it to such suggestive traits as the peculiar perverseness which manifested itself in his deliberate attempt to make himself as physically repulsive as possible.

But the most apparent failure is his treatment of Fields's last ten years in Hollywood. Since Mr. Taylor never takes his subject quite seriously, we are left with the image of a blustering, yet lovable scoundrel, pampered by everyone with whom he dealt. His deadpan reportage is effective in rendering the elaborate threats and hatreds of Fields—the vow to shoot Deanna Durban if she dared sing on her neighboring estate, the hunt for pedestrians in a gigantic automobile, the feud with Baby Leroy, the final tortures of alcoholism and insomnia—but this is, at best, merely reportage. Somehow the countless anecdotes which describe Fields's monstrous petulance seem to miss the point.

For in the constant, grinding quarrels with producers, directors, writers, there was the almost heroic honesty of an artist whose personality had taken more than fifty years of marvelously varied research to develop, who sensed that despite the enormous fees he might still exact for his services, Hollywood had less and less use for a comic who set himself against the overpowering array of gagmen and censors to preserve individual style. There was something ludicrous—and poignant—in his attempts to squeeze his own lines into scripts, interpolate bits of business which he knew must invariably end up on the cutting-room floor, yet forcing himself to go through the ritual of bitter struggle with each director, till his nervous system shattered. His last years were spent in coping with a talent which he could nowhere fully exercise, save perhaps upon a wooden dummy, from whose mouth was projected all the banal mediocrity of the contemporary comic art.

So savage did his humor become that even the coy references which Mr. Taylor gives are sufficiently provocative. Yet what he fails to perceive is that, ironically, Fields was his own greatest victim. If we think of Chaplin—to whom Fields is favorably compared—we see that even when The Little Tramp is set upon by a threatening society, there is always some way of his evading utter annihilation, if not by actually defeating the bully in open combat, at least by pulling his chair out from under him and escaping in a dizzying chase. But despite Fields's pose as the slick confidence-man, contemptuous of the sucker, suspicious and fearful of the honest, somehow it never matters

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how many bottles of snake-oil he may sell or how expertly he fleeces at cards—and it is rarely the *real* card-sharp whom he fleeces—he invariably ends up with the short end of the stick, for despite all his vast artfulness, his dodges and cajoling, the landlady will keep his luggage and the infant will pour the gin out of his hip-flask.

Chaplin was artist enough to objectify his hatreds, but for Fields the dilemma was virtually insoluble. Like Chaplin, he was able to create a great comic character, but its range was far too narrow and he was trapped within its confines. He could displace his hatreds only into the form of grotesque landladies and terrorizing children. These became the limits of his entire universe, along with bankers and industrialists, morticians and policemen, taking on for him at the end an aspect which was far from humorous.

In the recent revival of his older films there is an integrity which it is impossible to find in the false glibness of the more slick comedians, such as Bob Hope, who recall Hazlitt's observations: "The American mind is deficient in natural imagination The mind must be excited by overstraining, by pulleys and levers." For them, each gag is a tiny crisis without relief, foreshadowing only another crisis, and they become merely the automatons through which these lines are delivered with the precision timing of a machine-gun. They depend for their effect upon the perpetual anxiety of the spectator, who is aroused and then thrown back with such smoothness that he suffers scarcely a wrench in transition. But with Fields there is little attempt at "gagging." His humor seems to proceed without plan, ranging back and forth over the landscape, growing by improvisation and accretion like a smoking-room tale. It is almost completely the recital of his own vast misfortunes, often without sequence, chronology or completeness, droned on to an apparently senseless climax, and establishing a persecution complex of astounding proportions. Thus, even before his last films were made, he had reached the point beyond which no unadulterated development of his kind of material was possible.

Perhaps it is only when we juxtapose Fields with these new comic artificers who have moved so flawlessly in the circular continuum of night club to Hollywood to television that his greatness becomes apparent. For all his limitations, with the exception of Chaplin he was the last comedian who was able to create on the screen a personality of such dimension that it could exist apart from any of his films.

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